The Complete
Little Stories for Bedtime
by
Thornton W. Burgess
1917

The Complete Little Stories for Bedtime by Thornton W. Burgess, 1917.

Edited by Peter W. Oehlkers.

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Contents

Introduction 1
1527. New Year Wishes and Resolves 3
1528. Brother North Wind Knows No Pity 4
1529. Chatterer Scorns Brother North Wind 6
1530.Chatterer Awakes in Great Fright 7
1531. Chatterer's Fears are Realized 9
1532. Chatterer Learns to Have Sympathy 10
Illustrations. January 2 to January 6, 1917. 11
1533. After the Storm 12
1534. Granny and Reddy Fox Hunt in Vain 14
1535. Granny Fox Admits Growing Old 15
1536. Three Vain and Foolish Wishes 17
1537. Reddy Fights a Battle 18
Illustrations. January 8 to January 13, 1917. 20
1538. Reddy is Made Truly Happy 21
1539. Granny Fox Promises Reddy Bowser's Dinner 22
1540. Why Bowser the Hound Didn't Eat His Dinner 24
1541. Old Man Coyote Does a Little Thinking 25
1542. A Twice Stolen Dinner 27
Illustrations. January 15 to January 20, 1917. 28
1543. Granny and Reddy Talk Things Over 29
1544. Granny Fox Plans to Get a Fat Hen 31
1545. Farmer Brown's Boy Didn't Close the Gate 32
1546. A Midnight Visit 34
1547. A Dinner for Two 35
1548. Farmer Brown's Boy Sets a Trap 37
1549. Old Man Coyote Discovers Feathers 38
1550. Old Man Coyote Waits in Vain 39
Illustrations. January 22 to January 27, 1917. 40
1551. Farmer Brown's Boy Forgets 42
1552. Peter Rabbit Rubs His Eyes 43
1553. Jimmy Skunk Relieves Peter Rabbit 44
1554. Peter Rabbit Gains Wealth 46
1555. Peter Rabbit Watches and Is Watched 48
1556. Peter Tries to Visit Paddy the Beaver 50

Illustrations. January 29 to February 3, 1917. 51
1557. Peter Rabbit Investigates 52
1558. Peter Finds That Paddy is at Home 53
1559. Peter Has to Give Up 55
1560. A Willing Prisoner 56
1561. Farmer Brown's Boy Visits Paddy's Pond 57
Illustrations. February 5 to February 10, 1917. 59
1562. He Makes a Hole in Paddy's Dam 60
1563. Paddy the Beaver Grows Anxious 61
1564. Farmer Brown's Boy is Satisfied 62
1565. Reddy Fox Finds a Strange Track 63
1566. Reddy Fox Has a Funny Feeling 64
1567. The Timid Stranger 66
1568. Beautiful Miss Swiftfoot 67
Illustrations. February 12 to February 17, 1917. 68
1569. Reddy Fox Brags 69
1570. The Unpleasant Stranger 71
1571. A Fight for a Lady 72
1572. Beautiful Miss Swiftfoot is Glad 74
1573. The Planning of a New Home 75
1574.Old Granny Fox is Told the News 76
Illustrations. February 19 to February 24, 1917. 77
1575. Old Granny Fox Welcomes Mrs. Reddy 79
1576. Granny Fox is Quite Satisfied. 81
1577. How Peter Learned of Mrs. Reddy 82
1578. Peter and Mrs. Peter Almost Quarrel 83
1579. Mr. and Mrs. Reddy Choose a Home 85
1580. Bobby Coon Has a Bad Dream 86
Illustrations. February 26 to March 3, 1917. 87
1581. Bobby Coon Doesn't Know He's Awake 88
1582. Bobby Coon Has a Horrible Fright 90
1583. Bowser the Hound Discovers Someone at Home 91
1584. Bobby Coon Shows Fight 92
1585.Something is Wrong with Bobby Coon 93
Illustrations. March 5 to March 10, 1917. 95
1586. Bobby Coon Has a Strange Journey 96
1587. Farmer Brown's Boy Plays Doctor 97

1588. Bobby Coon is Made Much Of 98
1589. Farmer Brown's Boy and Bobby Celebrate 99
1590. Black Pussy Loses Her Bed 101
1591. Black Pussy Loses her Temper 102
1592. Black Pussy Upsets Things 103
Illustrations. March 12 to March 17, 1917. 104
1593. Black Pussy Grows Thin 106
1594. Bobby Begins to Long for the Green Forest 107
1595. The Happiest Coon Ever 108
1596. Bobby Coon Tries the Wrong House 110
1597. A House That Wasn't 111
1598. Bobby Coon Goes Fishing 113
Illustrations. March 19 to March 24, 1917. 114
1599. Bobby Coon Makes Another Mistake 115
1600. Bobby Coon Finds Out His Mistake 116
1601. Once More Bobby Tries to Sleep 117
1602. Blacky the Crow Discovers Bobby Coon 118
1603. Buster Bear is Hungry 120
1604. The Surprise of the Two Cousins 121
Illustrations. March 26 to March 31, 1917. 122
1605. Buster Bear's Short Temper 123
1606. Bobby Coon Gets a Terrible Shaking 125
1607. Peter Rabbit Saves Bobby Coon 126
1608. Buster Bear Regains His Lost Temper 127
1609. Bobby Coon Finds a Home at Last 128
1610. Bobby Coon's Nearest Neighbor 130
Illustrations. April 2 to April 7, 1917. 131
1611. Buster Bear Finds Bobby Coon 132
1612. Why Bobby Coon Decided to Stay 133
1613. Bobby Coon Discovers a New Neighbor 134
1614. Danny Meadow Mouse Listens to a Call 136
1615. Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse Start Home 137
1616. The Adventures of Danny and Nanny Begin. 138
Illustrations. April 9 to April 14, 1917. 139
1617. More Adventures. 141
1618. Which Was Lost? 142
1619. Danny Meadow Mouse is Terribly Worried. 143

1620. Danny Cannot Bear to Go Home. 144
1621. What Nanny Meadow Mouse Was Doing. 145
1622. Danny Meets Peter Rabbit 147
Illustrations. April 16 to April 21, 1917. 148
1623. Peter Looks for Nanny Meadow Mouse 149
1624. Sammy Jay Brings Danny a Message 150
1625. Home at Last 151
1626. The House in the Old Pasture 153
1627. Sammy Jay Becomes Suspicious 154
1628. Sammy Jay Spies on Reddy Fox 155
Illustrations. April 23 to April 28, 1917. 156
1629. What Sammy Jay Saw 158
1630. Sammy Jay Argues with Himself 159
1631. Sammy Jay Makes Up His Mind 160
1632. Peter and Mrs. Peter Grateful to Sammy 161
1633. Sammy Finds Farmer Brown's Boy at Work 163
1634. Farmer Brown's Boy Explains 164
Illustrations. April 30 to May 5, 1917. 165
1635. Farmer Brown's Boy Plans 166
1636. Farmer Brown's Boy Puts Up Signs 167
1637. A Bird Sanctuary 169
1638. Sammy Jay See the Babies of Reddy Fox 170
1639. Sammy Jay Gives Himself Away 171
1640. Lesson and Play 172
Illustrations. May 7 to May 12, 1917. 173
1641. A Play School 174
1642. Noses and Wits 176
1643. Dusky's Wits Help Out His Nose 177
1644. Dusky Continues to Learn 178
1645. Something About Sand 179
1646. Farmer Brown's Boy Finds Reddy's Home 180
Illustrations. May 14 to May 19, 1917. 181
1647. Farmer Brown's Boy is Clever 183
1648. Farmer Brown's Boy Sees Interesting Things 184
1649. First Lesson in Hunting 185
1650. Chubby Wanders Away 186
1651. Lost, Frightened, and Alone 188

1652. Chubby is More Frightened Than Ever 189
Illustrations. May 21 to May 26, 1917. 190
1653. Thump! Thump! Who are You? 191
1654. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Teases Chubby 192
1655. Chubby Gets Some Sound Advice 193
1656. Chubby Makes a Prickly Acquaintance 195
1657. Chubby Discovers Friendliness 196
Illustrations. May 28 to June 2, 1917. 198
1658. Chubby's Mother Discovers Her Loss 199
1659. The Search for Chubby 200
1660. Mrs. Reddy Hears a Dreadful Sound 201
1661. Mother Reddy's Bravery 202
1662. Reddy Fox Helps Out 203
1663. Chubby's Troubles End 204
1664. Jimmy Skunk and Unc' Billy Possum Meet 206
Illustrations. June 4 to June 9, 1917. 207
1665. Jimmy Skunk Explains 208
1666. A Little Something about Eggs 209
1667. Unc' Billy and Jimmy Skunk Meet Again 211
1668. A Matter of Politeness 212
1669. Jimmy Skunk Gets a Bump on the Head 213
1670. A Sad, Sad Quarrel 214
Illustrations. June 11 to June 16, 1917. 215
1671. Jimmy Skunk is True to His Word 217
1672. Farmer Brown's Boy Arrives 218
1673. The Nest-Egg Gives Unc' Billy Away 219
1674. Unc' Billy Possum Tries His Old Trick 220
1675. Unc' Billy Gives Himself Away 221
1676. Billy Mink Has a Secret 223
Illustrations. June 18 to June 23, 1917. 224
1677. Billy Mink Has Fun with Peter Rabbit 225
1678. Peter Catches on at Last 226
1679. Billy Mink Does Much Fishing 228
1680. A Hollow Log Nursery 229
1681. Hollow Log Play Days 230
1682. Learning by Doing 231
Illustrations. June 25 to June 30, 1917. 232

1683. Fun and Fish 234
1684. The First Lesson in Fishing 235
1685. Something About Shadows 236
1686. The Boldest Little Mink 238
Illustrations. July 2 to July 7, 1917. 239
1687. The Boldest Little Mink Learns a Lesson 240
1688. The Boldest Little Mink is Sulky 241
1689. The Timidest Little Mink is Laughed at 242
1690. Timidest Little Mink has Her Turn to Laugh 243
1691. Jimmy Skunk is Inquisitive 245
1692. Why Farmer Brown's Boy Got No Potatoes 246
1693. Several Folks are Puzzled 247
Illustrations. July 9 to June 14, 1917. 248
1694. Jimmy Skunk Gets Out 249
1695. Peter Rabbit Calls on Grandfather Frog 250
1696. Peter Rabbit Has a Question Ready 251
1697. Grandfather Frog Explains How He Breathes 252
1698. Grandfather Frog Has a Trying Day 253
1699. A Surprise Party 255
Illustrations. July 16 to June 21, 1917. 256
1700. Jimmy Skunk is Strangely Interested 257
1701. Peter Rabbit is Full of Questions 258
1702. Spotty the Turtle Answers Peter's Questions 259
1703. Grandfather Frog's Eyes 261
1704. Eyes that Go Up and Down 262
1705. Peter Grows Curious about Ol' Mr. Buzzard 263
Illustrations. July 23 to July 28, 1917. 264
1706. Peter Rabbit's Neck Hurts 265
1707. The Result of Peter's Watching 266
1708. Peter Rabbit is Jubilant 268
1709. Peter Tells the Truth 269
1710. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Teases Peter Rabbit 270
1711. Peter is Both Puzzled and Curious 271
Illustrations. July 30 to August 4, 1917. 272
1712. Peter Consults Sammy Jay 273
1713. Peter Arouses Sammy Jay's Interest 275
1714. Sammy Jay Disappoints Peter 276

1715. Sammy Jay Gives Peter Directions 277
1716. Peter Jumps Almost Out of His Skin 278
1717. The Mystery is Cleared Up 279
Illustrations. August 6 to August 11, 1917. 280
1718. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Explains Things 282
1719. Sammy Jay Speaks His Mind 283
1720. Peter Asks a Personal Question 284
1721. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Starts a Story 285
1722. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Finishes His Tale 287
1723. Peter Thinks He Must Be Dreaming 288
Illustrations. August 13 to August 18, 1917. 289
1724. Peter's Breath is Quite Taken Away 290
1725. Peter Makes a New Acquaintance 291
1726. Big Tom Asks Questions 292
1727. Peter Calms Big Tom 294
1728. Mrs. Gobbler Settles the Question 295
1729. Peter Tries to Keep a Secret 296
Illustrations. August 20 to August 25, 1917. 297
1730. The Jealousy of Little Mrs. Peter 298
1731. Sammy Jay's Hunt for Peter Rabbit 299
1732. The Secret is Out 301
1733. How the News was Received 302
1734. Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler Receive a Visitor 303
Illustrations. August 27 to September 1, 1917. 305
1735. Another Visitor Arrives 306
1736. Reddy Fox is on Hand at Shadow Time 307
1737. Reddy Fox and His Second Invitation 308
1738. Big Tom is Apologetic 310
1739. Reddy Tries Again 311
1740. Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler Take a Little Trip 312
1741. Reddy Fox Shows His True Self 313
Illustrations. September 3 to September 8, 1917. 314
1742. Big Tom Becomes Lonesome 315
1743. Big Tom is in a Bad Humor 316
1744. Big Tom's Jealousy 318
1745. Peter Rabbit's Accidental Discovery 319
1746. Peter Promises to be Good 320

1747. Peter Rabbit Fights Temptation 321
Illustrations. September 10 to September 15, 1917. 322
1748. Peter Gets his Reward 323
1749. Mrs. Gobbler's Worries 325
1750. The First Alarm 326
1751. A Grasshopper Feast 327
1752. Mrs. Gobbler Fools Reddy Fox 328
Illustrations. September 17 to September 22, 1917. 329
1753. Reddy Fox Thinks Too Late 330
1754. The Wisdom of Mrs. Gobbler 331
1755. The Young Gobblers Meet their Father 332
1756. Big Tom Heads his Family 333
1757. Hooty the Owl Overhears Reddy Fox Talking 335
1758. The Hunting of Hooty the Owl 336
Illustrations. September 24 to September 29, 1917. 337
1759. Too Frightened to Move 338
1760. Peter Rabbit Ducks 339
1761. Flitter the Bat Gossips About Himself 340
1762. Peter Becomes Better Acquainted with Flitter 341
1763. Flitter's Queer Arms and Legs 343
1764. Peter Rabbit Becomes Pop-eyed 344
Illustrations. October 1 to October 6, 1917. 345
1765. Flitter Answers More Questions 346
1766. The Riddle is Answered 347
1767. Peter Does a Favor 349
1768. The Beech-nut Picnic 350
1769. Buster Bear is Piggish 351
1770. Chatterer is a Second Buster Bear 352
Illustrations. October 8 to October 13, 1917. 353
1771. Chatterer Gets a Shaking 354
1772. Chatterer Nurses His Wounds 355
1773. Chatterer Does a Shameful Thing 356
1774. Chatterer Steals 358
1775. Sammy Jay Sets his Thinking Cap 359
1776. It Takes a Thief to Catch a Thief 360
Illustrations. October 15 to October 20, 1917. 361
1777. The Quarrel of Two Cousins 362

1778. Chatterer Doesn't Gloat 363
1779. Why Chatterer had No Chance to Gloat 364
1780. Chatterer Finds No Sympathy 365
1781. Chatterer Becomes Wiser if not Better 366
1782. Reddy Fox is Interested in Beechnuts 367
Illustrations. October 22 to October 27, 1917. 369
1783. Chatterer Proves Himself a Friend 370
1784. Happy Jack has Reason to Thank Chatterer 371
1785. Old Man Coyote Tries His Luck 372
1786. Buster Bear Does a Good Turn 373
1787. Sammy Jay Drops a Nut 374
1788. The End of the Beechnut Feast 376
Illustrations. October 29 to November 3, 1917. 377
1789. Peter Rabbit Finds Lightfoot in Trouble 378
1790. Peter Rabbit is Horrified 379
1791. Lightfoot's Sad Tale 380
1792. Matters are not so Bad as Lightfoot Fears 381
1793. Friendly Neighbors 383
1794. Mother Nature's Healing Touch 384
Illustrations. November 5 to November 10, 1917. 385
1795. Paddy the Beaver does a Little Studying 386
1796. Paddy Makes Up His Mind 387
1797. Peter's Admiration is Unbounded 388
1798. Peter Gets a Lesson in Logging 390
1799. Paddy Shows Peter Something 391
1800. Paddy Warns Peter to Stay Away 392
1801. What Peter Saw 393
Illustrations. November 12 to November 17, 1917. 394
1802. Peter Sees a Shadow 395
1803. Peter Does the Wise Thing 397
1804. A Fascinating Tail 398
1805. Peter Has a Good Look at Yowler 399
1806. Peter Sees a Chance and Takes It 400
Illustrations. November 19 to November 26, 1917. 401
1807. Yowler Studies His Neighbors 402
1808. Yowler Begins to Get Discouraged 403
1809. Almost, But Not Quite 404

1810. Yowler Discovers a Queer Tree 406
1811. An Interrupted Sleep 407
1812. Bowser the Hound Discovers Yowler 408
Illustrations. November 28 to December 1, 1917. 409
1813. Bowser has the Worst of a Fight 410
1814. Bowser Presents a Sorry Appearance 411
1815. Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Good Guess 412
1816. Bowser Turns Tail 413
1817. Farmer Brown's Boy Finds Yowler 415
1818. Farmer Brown's Boy Tries to Smoke Out Yowler 416
Illustrations. December 3 to December 8, 1917. 417
1819. Green Forest People Breathe Freely Again 418
1820. Buster Bear's Nose is Bumped 419
1821. Sammy Jay Nearly Splits His Side 420
1822. How Buster Bear Fought Himself 422
1823. Buster Bear Retires 423
1824. Jumper the Hare Becomes Anxious 424
1825. Jumper's Mind is Relieved 425
Illustrations. December 10 to December 15, 1917. 426
1826. A Test of Two Coats 427
1827. Peter Rabbit Broods 429
1828. Jimmy Skunk Shames Peter Rabbit 430
1829. Peter Rabbit Has a Funny Feeling 431
1830. Inside Johnny Chuck's House 432
1831. Johnny Chuck's Queer Christmas 433
Illustrations. December 17 to December 22, 1917. 434
1832. Was Johnny Chuck Dead? 435
1833. Peter Decides to Hold His Tongue 437
1834. The Gray Terror 438
1835. Discussing Mr. Goshawk 439
1836. The Great Fear 440
Illustrations. December 24 to December 31, 1917. 442

Introduction.

1917 was a busy year for Thornton W. Burgess. In addition to his weekly newspaper story, Burgess initiated a multi-year bird sanctuary campaign, contributed articles to a wartime propaganda group, and started a bi-weekly nature newsletter for school children.

The year's Little Stories for Bedtime included those later compiled into *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, *The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, *The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, and *Old Granny Fox*. As before, several stories from the newspaper arcs were omitted from the books—these are noted in the text. New characters introduced during 1917 included Miss Swiftfoot (Mrs. Reddy Fox), Redhead the Woodpecker (eliminating any doubt that Drummer was a Downy Woodpecker), and Yowler the Bobcat (who had been mentioned previously but not featured). Of note was Big Tom Gobbler, the Wild Turkey, and his family. Here again Burgess showed remarkable prescience about the future ecology of Massachusetts. By 1917, native Wild Turkeys had been extirpated in Massachusetts, but some were being reintroduced from southern states (not the deep south, as Burgess made clear). Farmer Brown's boy was a participant in this ultimately very successful reintroduction project.

There were fox children, mink children, turkey children, and bat children who needed to be taught to behave and be safe (Spotty the Turtle, true to life, did not seem to care much what happened to his offspring). Farmer Brown's boy continued to play a large role in the lives of the animals, cutting down Bobby Coon's tree and then nursing him back to health, experimenting with Paddy the Beaver's dam, planting bird-friendly trees and posting no-hunting signs, and intervening to drive off Yowler the Bobcat. Human predation played a smaller role than in previous years, with the exception of a shotgun injury to Lightfoot the Deer—the Green Forest and Meadows had become a wild-life sanctuary where hunters were not allowed.

Working with William T. Hornaday and the publisher Moody B. Gates, Burgess began his Green Meadow Club Bird Sanctuaries Campaign in the pages of the *People's Home Journal*. Details about this campaign can be found in a separate volume (*People's Home Journal Green Meadow Club Bird Sanctuaries Campaigns, 1917-1925*). While the campaign was active for several years and eventually administered by Hornaday, in 1917 Burgess took the lead, justifying bird protection as a wartime food security necessity. This campaign would be introduced to Canadian audiences via the *Toronto Star*, for which Burgess was still contributing a weekly "personal letter," (see Appendix 2) and was incorporated into a Little Stories for Bedtime arc in which Farmer Brown's boy modeled what one might do to create a proper bird sanctuary.

The United States entered the war in Europe in April. Burgess, along with many other prominent writers and artists, joined a group known as the Vigilantes, for the purpose of contributing propaganda material for small newspapers across the country. Most of Burgess's contributions promoted war bonds, but he did write one article (included in Appendix 1) where he drew upon his animal character, Jimmy Skunk, to stress the importance of "preparedness" and a strong defense. This would be a Burgess talking point for years to come.

In 1917 Burgess partnered with fellow nature writer George Gladden to produce

a four-page newsletter for children titled "Mother Nature's News." The first issues came out in May. This was an independent initiative apparently run out of Burgess's house that sought to leverage the popularity of Burgess's stories and characters among schoolteachers and their students. It came out every two weeks during the school year and featured photographs, longer feature stories about a particular animal species, and shorter "news" items about the goings on in the Green Meadow, Green Forest, Smiling Pond, and Old Orchard. Some newspapers republished large excerpts from these newsletters. A collection of these may be found in Appendix 3.

Some inconsistencies in the dating and numbering of the stories in 1917 should be noted. Burgess (inadvertently?) dated his first story of the year for publication on January 1. Since very few papers had New Year's Day editions, all the newspapers I have been able to access ran the story, at the earliest, on January 2. Eventually the date on the original manuscripts were corrected to match the actual date of publication. Sometime during the middle of the year, however, mistakes were made in numbering the original manuscripts, meaning that by the end of the year my number and the official number are off by two. I will reconcile the numbering again when the stories reach 2000. Meanwhile, I just wanted to note that the numbering in this volume should not be considered "official" even though, as far as I can tell, it is based on an accurate story count.

As in previous volumes I remain indebted to the Burgess bibliographers of the past, Wayne Wright and Michael Dowhan, for doing the groundwork that makes a volume like this possible.

And finally, I am dedicating this volume to my mother, who introduced me to Burgess books when I was a child. She herself was a second-generation Burgess fan, having been introduced to the stories by the teacher of her one-room schoolhouse in northern Wisconsin. Her teacher used the books to try to convince the boys in her school not to shoot birds. My mother's favorite Burgess book was *At the Smiling Pool*, published in 1945. Mine was *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, featured in this volume.

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STORY 1527. January 2, 1917[1]

New Year Wishes and Resolves

A funny New Year it would be
  Without a wish from me to thee;
Without a wish from thee, to me
  A funny New Year it would be.

Of course wishes alone cannot make happiness, but they can and do go a long way toward starting happiness. Certainly it cannot make you unhappy to know that others wish you to be happy. Of course not. So it is a very nice thing at the beginning of a new year to go about telling all you meet that you wish happiness for them all through the year. Somehow it seems to start the year in the right way.

Peter Rabbit thinks so. He makes it a point to wish all his neighbors happiness on New Year's Day, even those who try to catch him. He says it doesn't cost him anything to scatter good wishes, and you never can tell what may come of them. Wishes, you know, are very much like birds; often they come home to roost. Peter began this new year by staying at home in the dear Old Brier Patch and by wishing little Mrs. Peter the happiest year of her life. The very fact that Peter was staying at home made her happy, so you see it was a very good beginning. Then Peter sat at the very edge of the dear Old Brier Patch so that he would be sure to see everyone who came that way, and just as soon as any one got near enough he wished him a happy New Year.

It seemed as if almost everyone he knew happened along that day, too. Old Man Coyote was one of the of the first.

"Happy New Year!" called Peter.

Old Man Coyote stopped and grinned. "Do you really mean it?" he asked.

"Of course I mean it," replied Peter indignantly. "What good are wishes which are not meant?" I hope this new year will be a very happy one for you, every day of it."

"Thank you, Peter. I wish you the same," replied Old Man Coyote.

"By the way, have you made any resolutions?" asked Peter.

Old Man Coyote grinned again. "I had, Peter, I had," said he. "At least I had made one, but I guess now I'll have to change it."

"What was it and why will you have, to change it?" asked Peter, his eyes shining with curiosity.

"I had resolved," replied Old Man Coyote with a twinkle in his eyes, "to dine on a certain fellow named Peter Rabbit before this year is out, but—"

"But what?" cried Peter.

---

1 This story is dated January 1, 1917 in the original manuscript. Newspapers published it on January 2.

“I wish you a happy New Year,” replied Old Man Coyote with a very low bow. Then he trotted away, laughing good-naturedly, and Peter laughed, too. Hardly was he out of sight when along came Blacky the Crow.

“Happy New Year!” cried Peter.

“Caw, caw, caw! Same to you,” replied Blacky.

“Have you made any resolutions?” shouted Peter.

“I am resolved the world to show,
That though I’m black I’m white as snow,”

replied Blacky, keeping on toward the Green Forest.

Peter looked puzzled for a minute, then his face cleared. “He must mean that though he is black in coat and name he means to do no black deeds this year,” thought Peter. “That’s perfectly splendid. Here comes Reddy Fox. Happy New Year, Reddy! What new resolution have you made?”

Reddy paused and showed all his teeth in a broad grin.

“I am resolved.” replied the sinner,
To get each day an honest dinner;
And if some day it should be Rabbit
Twill merely be from force of habit.”

“If you catch me honestly I won’t even squeal,” retorted Peter. “Here comes Sammy Jay. I wonder what he has resolved.”

“Happy New Year everybody!” cried Sammy as he hurried up. “I made the dandiest resolution. Want to know what it is?” Then, without waiting for a reply he added:

“I am resolved this glad New Year
To keep my tongue from mischief clear;
To mend my ways until I am
Known far and wide as Honest Sam.”

“Goody!” cried Peter, clapping his hands. “I think this is going to be the finest year ever. I haven’t made any resolutions, but I’m going to just as soon as I can think of some.”

STORY 1528. January 3, 1917.

Brother North Wind Knows No Pity

The wind bloweth hard; the wind bloweth cold;
Pity the hungry; pity the old.

Down from the far Northland swept rough Brother North Wind and he roared and he shouted, and the sound of his coming was heard while yet he was a long way off,

and all who heard it shivered. Yes, sir, all the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows shivered and shook at the sound. That is, all those did who were not asleep like Johnny Chuck and Buster Bear and Bobby Coon. To them the coming of rough Brother North Wind meant nothing at all, but to the others, those who had to go about every day looking for food, it meant a great deal, a great deal of discomfort and, perhaps, some suffering. You see, they knew that he was driving before him a great storm, and a storm at this time of year means snow and sleet and ice.

So all the little people who were awake hurried to fill their stomachs, for there was no knowing when they would have another chance, and they must have food if they would keep warm. And, because it was Winter, food was hard to find, and they wondered with sinking hearts how long the storm would last and if they would become so hungry that they would just have to go hunting for more before the storm was over. The day grew dark and great clouds hurried down from the north, driven by rough Brother North Wind. Fine white snow began to hiss among the branches of the trees. Faster and faster it hissed down, and then, with a howl and a roar, rough Brother North Wind arrived and drove it before him in such clouds that all the little people fled hastily for the snuggest, warmest shelters they could find.

Peter and Mrs. Peter Rabbit were glad to crawl down in a certain old hole in the heart of the dear Old Brier Patch, where they would, at least, be warm. Tommy Tit the Chickadee and Drummer the Woodpecker each crept into a hollow tree. Mrs. Grouse crept under a pile of brush in a hollow in the Green Forest. Bob White and Mrs. Bob huddled together under the shelter Farmer Brown's boy had built for them in the far corner of the Old Orchard. Sammy Jay tried to find shelter and comfort in a big hemlock tree, but couldn't, and finally crept into a hollow where the snow could not reach him. Even Reddy and Granny Fox were glad to crawl down in their house and stay there.

All the rest of that day and all the night and all the next day rough Brother North Wind roared and howled through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows. He shrieked through the treetops. He broke off great branches. He blew over dead trees. He piled the snow in drifts. He drove it into every crack and cranny he could find. And all the time he shouted in glee:

"Oh, I am the North Wind! The North Wind am I!
  Who is there so bold as my strength to defy?
I glory in might! I am fearless and bold!
  Of pity I've none for the weak or the old!"

And all the little people hearing that knew it to be true. Rough Brother North Wind is pitiless. He always will be pitiless. Pity is something of which he knows not the meaning. He comes from a land where only the stout of heart and the strong can live. To these he gives freely of his own strength, but from those who are weak he takes what little strength they have. So it is not to be wondered at that he had no thought for the little people who were really prisoners, his prisoners, in their own homes.

For two days and a night they had no chance to get out to look for food and some of them were getting very, very faint with hunger. To add to their misery, they were

having hard work to keep from freezing. You know, the warmest coat of fur or feathers will not keep out the cold if there is no heat from within, and it is food that makes heat within.

Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and Chatterer the Red Squirrel had nuts stored away and so they were not hungry. Whitefoot the Wood Mouse had seeds where he could get them, so he didn't mind. But Tommy Tit and Drummer the Woodpecker and Sammy Jay and Mrs. Grouse and other little feathered folks shivered and shook, for their stomachs were empty and they knew that if they could not get out soon to get food they would die. Even Granny and Reddy Fox were getting desperate. And all the time rough Brother North Wind roared and howled and knew no pity.

STORY 1529. January 4, 1917

Chatterer Scorns Brother North Wind

For two days and a night rough Brother North Wind roared and howled and shrieked and drove the falling snow this way and drove it that way through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows and had no pity for the little people who live there. No, sir, he had no pity at all. Not one of them dared poke nose or toes outside. At first a few of them didn't mind. Chatterer the Red Squirrel was one. Curled up in his bed of leaves in a hollow branch of an old apple tree in the Old Orchard, he was thoroughly comfortable. In that same hollow branch was a goodly store of corn and nuts hidden there for just such a time as this. So it didn't trouble him in the least how cold or now stormy it might be outside. It rather tickled him to listen to rough Brother North Wind boasting of his strength and boldness. His nose turned up a wee bit scornfully as he muttered:

Roar and shriek and howl and boast;
Here am I as warm as toast!
Rage as long as you may please:
I will eat and sleep at ease.
Other folks may frightened be,
But your bluster don't scare me.

And this was quite true. Chatterer wasn't afraid. Why should he be? There wasn't a single thing to worry about. He had warmth, comfort and plenty to eat, and he didn't need to so much as to poke his nose outside, no matter how long the storm lasted. To his less fortunate friends and neighbors, Chatterer didn't give so much as a single thought. If they were in trouble it was no concern of his. It is very apt to be that way with people. If they have no troubles of their own they give no thought to the trouble of others.

The harder rough Brother North Wind blew and the louder the fine icy particles of snow hissed through the bare branches of the trees the more comfortable Chatterer felt and the better grew his opinion of his own wisdom in laying up a store of food while the weather was good and food plentiful.

“He thinks he is a terrible fellow, does rough Brother North Wind. Just listen to him!” chuckled Chatterer. “But he doesn’t scare me a bit. He may blow his head off for all I care. It would be a very different matter if I was out where he could get at me, but I’m not. I’m right here, snug and comfortable, and for all his boasting he can’t get at me—and he knows it. That is the result of using a little sense in choosing a home. There is nothing quite like being prepared. When I chose this home, I knew what I was about. Now let that fellow bluster and brag and blow till he gets, tired. I don’t care two flirts of my tail for him, and I’d like to tell him so.”

This idea tickled Chatterer. The more he thought about it the more it tickled him. Finally he crept to his little round doorway and put his head out.

“Whoop!” shouted rough Brother North Wind and dashed a handful of stinging icy snow in Chatterer’s face. Chatterer pulled his head in in a hurry. When he could get his breath, he had quite lost his temper.

“You think you are smart, don’t you?” he barked angrily, taking care to put no more than the tip of his nose outside. “You are nothing but a great big bully! That’s what you are—a bully! Just listen to this, Brother North Wind: I don’t care a twist of my whiskers for you or your boasting. You may scare some folks, but not me. Howl and roar all you please; you can’t get me. You can’t so much as give me a bad dream. You can’t frighten me, Brother North Wind! You can’t frighten me!”

Rough Brother North Wind blew an angry blast in at Chatterer’s little round doorway and roared:

Beware, beware how you defy
  My rage and strength!
If I but try I’ll make you wish before the morn
  You’d held your tongue or ne’er been born!

“Ha, ha, ha! Idle boasting! Just idle boasting!” cried Chatterer scornfully and returned to his warm bed to curl himself up in comfort.

STORY 1530. January 5, 1917

Chatterer Awakes in Great Fright

All the rest of the afternoon after he had defied rough Brother North Wind to do his worst Chatterer the Red Squirrel dozed in his warm bed in a hollow limb of the old apple tree where he lived. Once in a while he would wake up and listen to the storm outside and chuckle to think how he had dared rough Brother North Wind and had called him a boaster. Sometimes the old apple tree would shiver and shake in a mighty blast from rough Brother North Wind, but this didn’t trouble Chatterer a bit. Hadn’t that tree done just this same thing in the storms of many Winters? So Chatterer just turned over for another nap.

Just before dark Chatterer ate a good supper from his store of corn and nuts, peeped out to see what it was like outside, and then went back to his warm bed and in

no time at all was sound asleep. He had forgotten all about rough Brother North Wind's threat that before the coming of the morn he would make Chatterer sorry that he hadn't held his tongue. Anyway, he had thought that was nothing but idle boasting on the part of rough Brother North Wind.

Outside rough Brother North Wind roared and howled louder than ever and the snow fell faster than ever and was blown this way and that way. It was a terrible storm and as the night grew older the storm grew more terrible. Rough Brother North Wind seemed to be trying to show just how fierce and terrible and strong he could be. Over in the Green Forest he was snapping off great branches from the trees as if they were but twigs in his icy fingers. But Chatterer knew nothing of this and slept on in comfort.

By and by Chatterer began to have bad dreams. He dreamed that a terrible giant had caught him and was shaking him so that it seemed as if every bone was becoming loose. Just as he felt sure that in a minute, he certainly would fly to pieces he opened his eyes. For a minute he couldn't think where he was, for it was very dark and he was being shaken. Then he knew. He was in his own bed in the hollow limb of the apple tree and the old apple tree was being shaken by rough Brother North Wind, shaken as Chatterer never had known it to be shaken before.

Snap! That was the end of the very limb, in which he was! It had been broken short off. Chatterer scrambled to his feet and shook with fright. A draft of cold air came in at the open end of the broken limb and the voice of rough Brother North Wind seemed to be shrieking with dreadful glee. The old apple tree shook more than ever and now Chatterer heard a sound that made his heart come right up in his throat. At least that is the way it seemed. That sound was a sharp cracking sound, and it came from just back of him, where that hollow limb joined the trunk of the tree.

"O, dear! O, dear me! What is going to happen?" moaned Chatterer, for not even in his bad dream had he been more frightened than he was this minute.

"Whoop! Whoopee! Whoop!" shouted rough Brother North Wind outside, and once more there was that dreadful cracking sound.

Never in all his life had Chatterer wanted to run more than he wanted to run then, but there was no place to run to. He couldn't run out into that dreadful storm in the night, for there he would not know which way to turn and would soon freeze to death. No, all he could do was to stay right where he was and hope with all his might that nothing bad would happen. And this is what he did.

There would be times when it seemed as if rough Brother North Wind had gone away. His voice would sound as from a long distance and Chatterer would begin to feel easier. Then without warning the old tree would begin to shake again and Chatterer would listen for that dreaded cracking sound. It was a very different Chatterer sitting there in the night shaking with fear from the one who had dared rough Brother North Wind and treated him with scorn early in the afternoon. Yes, indeed, it was a very different Chatterer. And with all his heart he wished he had kept his tongue still. Perhaps if he had, Brother North Wind would not have tried his strength on that old apple tree.

STORY 1531. January 6, 1917

Chatterer's Fears are Realized

To have a thing realized is to have it come true. If you hope something will happen and it does happen, your hope is realized. In the same way, if you fear something will happen and it does happen, your fear is realized. Chatterer the Red Squirrel was possessed by a terrible fear. He crouched in his home in the hollow limb of an old apple tree in the Old Orchard and shivered and shook with fear. It was night and outside a terrible storm was raging. Rough Brother North Wind was shrieking and howling and showing his great strength by snapping off branches of trees and tossing them about as if they were mere playthings. His breath was icy cold and he drove the flying snow before him in such clouds that even had it not been night no one could have seen more than a foot or two about them.

But all this Chatterer would not have minded in the least but for certain sounds which he heard now and then when rough Brother North Wind would blow a little harder than usual. Those sounds were the snapping and cracking of wood and Chatterer knew that his home was in danger. He knew that rough Brother North Wind was trying to break off that limb and if he should succeed, well, Chatterer tried not to think of what would be likely to happen to him.

But those dreadful cracking sounds became more and more frequent and his teeth chattered, not with cold, but with fear. You see he had felt so safe and warm in there that he could not be in the least danger. Why, that old tree with its hollow limb had been there for years and years, and nothing ever had happened to it. That is why he had been so scornful of rough Brother North Wind and had called him a bully and idle boaster. Now as he sat there in the dark shivering and shaking, and helpless he remembered Brother North Wind's warning:

"Beware, beware how you defy
My rage and strength! If I but try
I'll take you wish before the morn
You'd held your tongue or ne'er been born!"

It was true now. With all his heart Chatterer did wish he had held his tongue. "If only I could take back all I said," whimpered Chatterer. "If only I could. O, dear! O, dear! What is going to become of me?"

Crack! Cr-r-rack!

"O-o-o!" shrieked Chatterer, and dug his claws into the wall of his house.

Crack! Crack! Snap!

Chatterer felt himself falling and turning over and over. A blast of bitter cold air swept through the hollow limb and then there was another snap as the limb broke square in two. Then all was still save for the noise of rough Brother North Wind, who was howling in glee.

What had happened? Why that limb had been torn from the tree and whirled down to the snow-covered ground. There it had struck on end and this was what had broken it in two. You see that sharp end had gone right down through the snow, which was not very deep just there because rough Brother North Wind had swept much of it away to drift in other places. When it had struck the hard frozen ground something just had to break.

Poor Chatterer! For a few minutes he lay there with his eyes closed wondering if this was the end of the world and if it wasn't what would happen next. But nothing did happen save that the snow began to creep in at the open ends of the broken limb. Then Chatterer began to realize how cold it was. Part of his bed of leaves was gone, but enough remained to be crowded in at one end and shut out the snow. His corn and nuts were gone, but he didn't think of these then. He wasn't hungry. Goodness, no! Thought of food never entered his head then. He was thankful to be alive and the first thing to be thought of was to shut out the cold.

Unknown to him the snow was helping him do this. It was drifting over that broken limb and in a little while it had quite buried it. Then the cold air could no longer reach him and Chatterer began to feel fairly comfortable. The deeper the snow became the warmer it grew, and after a while Chatterer actually curled up and went to sleep. You see, after his awful fright he was quite used up.

STORY 1532. January 8, 1917

Chatterer Learns to Have Sympathy

To have sympathy is to feel sorry for others. Chatterer the Red Squirrel never knew what it was to have sympathy for others. He always said that if people got into trouble it was no business of his, and if they went hungry, it was their own fault. Of course, he knew that very often in bad Winter weather some of his neighbors often went hungry a great deal of the time, but he used to say that it served them right for not laying up a store of food as he did. So he never had any sympathy for them. You see Chatterer is something of a scatter-brain. That is, he seldom does any real thinking.

He never had stopped to think that there might be a reason why Tommy Tit and Drummer the Woodpecker and Peter Rabbit and Reddy Fox and a lot more of his neighbors couldn't store up food as he did. He used to turn up his nose and say it was because they were too lazy or didn't know enough. You know and I know and if he had stopped to really think, Chatterer would have known that it was and is because these others live on food that cannot be stored away as corn and nuts and seeds can.

So, because he never had had to go very, very hungry Chatterer had not learned to have sympathy for others. But he was to learn now. You see when he awoke the morning after the terrible experience when the hollow limb in which he had made his home was broken off and blown to the ground, where it broke in two again, he couldn't imagine at first where he was. He lay there blinking for a minute or two and then it all came back to him, the terrible fright he had had and the dreadful thing that had happened to his house. He scrambled to his feet and as usual the first thing he thought

Illustrations. January 2 to January 6, 1917.

1527. New Year Wishes and Resolves.
"Caw-Caw-Caw! Same to you," replied Blacky.

1528. Brother North Wind Knows No Pity.
Even Reddy and Granny Fox were glad to crawl down into their house and stay there.

1529. Chatterer Scorns Brother North Wind
"You can't frighten me, Brother North Wind."

1530. Chatterer Awakes in Great Fright
"O, dear me, what is going to happen?" moaned Chatterer.

1531. Chatterer's Fears are Realized
"If I could only take back all I said," whimpered Chatterer.

of was something to eat. His stomach was empty. Right then he realized fully what a fix he was in. The piece of the hollow limb in which he was, was not very big and there wasn't so much as a grain of corn or a single nut there. All his splendid store of food had been in the other part of that hollow limb and where that was now he hadn't the least idea.

For a long time he sat thinking, wondering what he had best do, and all the time his stomach kept feeling emptier and emptier. "Sitting still won't get me anything," said he at last. "I'm not afraid of snow, so I guess I'll dig my way out and see what I can find."

He went to work with a will and dug his way out and up, but the instant he poked his head out of the snow it was to have his breath snatched away and blinding little icy particles driven into his face so that he was glad to shut his eyes and duck down again. The storm was not yet over.

"Phew!" he gasped. "I can't go out there. What shall I do now? Perhaps I can find the other part of my hollow limb if I dig for it. I'll try it anyway."

Now, Chatterer is no shirk. He is a good worker, as everybody knows. So he set to work to dig a little tunnel in the snow. The trouble was he didn't have the least idea in which direction to dig and it happened that he chose the wrong direction. For a long time he dug, but it was in vain. Then he went back to his broken house to rest. Working like that had made him still more hungry. You know it is very, very hard to work on an empty stomach. When he felt a little rested, he started to dig in another direction and was no more successful than before. You see he had nothing whatever to guide him down there in the snow. He just had to trust to luck, and luck was very much against him.

After a while he had to stop oftener to rest. His tunnels grew shorter and shorter. But he is plucky, is Chatterer, and he kept at it just as long as he could. His stomach fairly ached from emptiness and at last he was so tired and discouraged that he had to give up.

"I wonder if anybody ever was as hungry as I am," he thought miserably. That reminded him of Tommy Tit and Drummer the Woodpecker and Peter Rabbit and others of his friends and suddenly it came over him that they must be quite as helpless as he in this dreadful storm and that some of them doubtless had been without food longer than he had. "My gracious, I'm sorry for them!" he exclaimed right out loud. "I never understood before why it was they dreaded storms so, but I know now. I certainly am sorry for them if they are as hungry as I am, and I guess they are." And so it was that Chatterer learned to have sympathy.

STORY 1533. January 9, 1917.

After the Storm

The joys and the sunshine that make us glad;
  The worries and troubles that makes us sad
Must come to an end; so why complain

Of too little sun or too much rain?

The thing to do is to make the most of the sunshine while it lasts, and when it rains to look forward to the coming of the sun again, knowing that come it surely will. That dreadful storm which was keeping the little people of the Green Forest, the Green Meadows, and the Old Orchard prisoners in their own homes or in such places of shelter as they had been able to find couldn't last forever and they knew it.

Knowing this was all that kept some of them alive. You see, they were starving. Yes, sir, they were starving. You and I would be very hungry, very hungry indeed, if we had to go without food for two whole days, but if we were snug and warm it wouldn't do us any real harm. With the little wild friends, especially the little feathered folks, it is a very different matter. You see, they are naturally so active that they have to fill their stomachs very often in order to supply their little bodies with heat and energy. So, when their food supply is wholly cut off, they starve or else freeze to death in a very short time. A great many little lives are ended this way in every long, hard winter storm.

It was late in the afternoon of the second day when rough Brother North Wind decided that he had shown his strength and fierceness long enough, and rumbling and grumbling retired from the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, blowing the snow clouds away with him. For just a little while before it was time for him to go to bed behind the Purple Hills, jolly, round, red Mr. Sun smiled down on the white land, and never was his smile more welcome. Out from their shelters hurried all the little prisoners, for they must make the most of the short time before the coming of the cold night.

Little Tommy Tit the Chickadee was so weak that he could hardly fly, and he shook with chills. He made straight for the apple-tree where Farmer Brown's boy always keeps a piece of suet tied to a branch for Tommy and his friends. Drummer the Woodpecker was there before him. Now it is one of the laws of politeness among the feathered folk that when one is eating from a piece of suet a newcomer shall await his turn.

"Dee, dee, dee!" said Tommy Tit faintly but cheerfully, for he couldn't be other than cheery if he tried. "Dee, dee, dee! That looks good to me."

"It is good," mumbled Drummer, pecking away at the suet greedily. "Come on, Tommy Tit. Don't wait for me, for I won't be through for a long time. I'm nearly starved, and I guess you must be."

"I am," confessed Tommy, as he flew over beside Drummer. "Thank you ever so much for not making me wait."

"Don't mention it," replied Drummer, with his mouth full. "This is no time for politeness. Here comes Yank Yank the Nuthatch. I guess there is room for him too."

Yank Yank was promptly invited to join them and did so after apologizing for seeming so greedy.

"If I couldn't get my stomach full before night, I certainly should freeze to death before morning," said he. "What a blessing it is to have all this good food waiting for

us. If I had to hunt for my usual food on the trees, I certainly should have to give up and die. It took all my strength to get over here. My, I feel like a new bird already! Here comes Sammy Jay. I wonder if he will try to drive us away as he usually does."

Sammy did nothing of the kind. He was very meek and most polite. "Can you make room for a starving fellow to get a bite?" he asked. "I wouldn't ask it but that it will so soon be dark and I couldn't last another night without food."

"Dee, dee, dee! Always room for one more," replied Tommy Tit, crowding over to give Sammy room. "Wasn't that a dreadful storm?"

"Worst I ever knew," mumbled Sammy. "I wonder if I ever will be warm again."

Until their stomachs were full, not another word was said. Meanwhile Chatterer the Red Squirrel had discovered that the storm was over. As he floundered through the snow to another apple-tree he saw Tommy Tit and his friends, and in his heart he rejoiced that they had found food waiting for them. His own troubles were at an end, for in the tree he was headed for was a store of corn and nuts. You see he was wise enough to have more than one storehouse.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 11)

STORY 1534. January 10, 1917

Granny and Reddy Fox Hunt in Vain

Tommy Tit and Drummer the Woodpecker and Yank Yank the Nuthatch and Sammy Jay and Chatterer the Red Squirrel were not the only ones who were out and about as soon as the great storm ended. Oh, my, no! No, indeed! Everybody who was not sleeping the winter away, or who had not a store of food right at hand, was out. But not all were so fortunate as Tommy Tit and his friends in finding a good meal.

Peter Rabbit and Mrs. Peter came out of the hole in the heart of the dear Old Briar-patch, where they had managed to keep comfortably warm, and at once began to fill their stomachs with bark from young trees and tender tips of twigs. It was very coarse food, but it would take away that empty feeling. Mrs. Grouse burst out of the snow and hurried to get a meal before dark. She had no time to be particular, and so she ate spruce buds. They were very bitter and not much to her liking, but she was too hungry, and night was too near for her to be fussy. She was thankful to have that much.

Reddy and Granny Fox were out too. They didn't need to hurry because, as you know, they could hunt all night, but they were so hungry that they just had to be looking for something to eat. They knew, of course, that everybody else would be out, and they hoped that some of these little people would be so weak that they could easily be caught. That seems like a dreadful hope, doesn't it? But one of the first laws of Old Mother Nature is self-preservation. That means to save your own life first. So perhaps Granny and Reddy are not to be blamed for hoping that some of their neighbors might be easily caught because of the great storm. They were very hungry indeed, and they could not eat bark like Peter Rabbit, or buds like Mrs. Grouse, or seeds like Whitefoot

the Woodmouse. Their teeth and stomachs are not made for such food.

It was hard going for Granny and Reddy Fox. The snow was soft and deep in many places, and they had to keep pretty close to those places where rough Brother North Wind had blown away enough of the snow to make walking fairly easy. They soon found that their hope that they would find some of their neighbors too weak to escape was quite in vain. When jolly, round, red Mr. Sun dropped down behind the Purple Hills to go to bed, their stomachs were quite as empty as when they had started out.

"We'll go down to the Old Briar Patch. I don't believe it will be of much use, but you never can tell until you try. Peter Rabbit may take it into his silly head to come outside," said Granny, leading the way.

When they reached the dear Old Briar-patch they found that Peter was not outside. In fact, peering between the brambles and bushes, they could see his little brown form bobbing about as he hunted for tender bark. He had already made little paths along which he could hop easily. Peter saw them almost as soon as they saw him.

"Hard times these," said Peter pleasantly. "I hope your stomachs are not as empty as mine." He pulled a strip of bark from a young tree and began to chew it. This was more than Reddy could stand. To see Peter eating while his own stomach was just one great big ache from emptiness was too much.

"I'm going in there and catch him, or drive him out where you can catch him, if I tear my clothes all to pieces!" snarled Reddy.

Peter stopped chewing and sat up. "Come right along, Reddy. Come right along if you want to, but I would advise you to save your skin and your clothes," said he.

Reddy's only reply was a snarl as he pushed his way under the brambles. He yelped as they tore his coat and scratched his face, but he kept on. Now Peter's paths were very cunningly made. He had cut them through the very thickest of the briars just big enough for himself and Mrs. Peter to hop along comfortably. But Reddy is so much bigger that he had to force his way through and in places crawl flat on his stomach, which was very slow work, to say nothing of the painful scratches from the briars. It was no trouble at all for Peter to keep out of his way, and before long Reddy gave up. Without a word Granny Fox led the way to the Green Forest. They would try to find where Mrs. Grouse was sleeping under the snow. But though they hunted all night, they failed to find her, for she wisely had gone to bed high up in a thick spruce-tree. So at daybreak Granny and Reddy reached home tired and hungrier than ever.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 12)

STORY 1535. January 11, 1917

Granny Fox Admits Growing Old

Old Granny Fox is a spry old lady for her age. If you don't believe it just try to catch her. But spry as she is, she isn't as spry as she used to be. No, sir, Granny Fox isn't as spry as she used to be. The truth is, Granny is getting old. She never would

admit it, and Reddy never had realized it until the day after the great storm. All that night they had hunted in vain for something to eat and at daylight had crept into their house to rest awhile before starting on another hunt. They had neither the strength nor the courage to search any longer then. Wading through snow is very hard work at best and very tiresome, but when your stomach has been empty for so long that you almost begin to wonder what food tastes like, it becomes harder work still. You see, it is food that makes strength, and lack of food takes away strength.

This was why Granny and Reddy Fox just had to rest. Hungry as they were, they had to give up for a while. Reddy flung himself down, and if ever there was a discouraged young Fox he was that one. "I wish I were dead," he moaned.

"Tut, tut, tut!" said Granny Fox sharply. "That's no way for a young fox to talk! I'm ashamed of you. I am indeed." Then she added more kindly: "I know just how you feel. Just try to forget your empty stomach and rest a while. We have had a tiresome, disappointing, discouraging night, but when you are rested things will not look quite so bad. You know the old saying:

'Never a road so long is there
But it comes to a turn at last;
Never a cloud that gathers swift
But disappears as fast.'

You think you couldn't possibly feel any worse than you do right now, but you could. Many a time I have had to go hungry longer than this. After we have rested a while we will go over to the Old Pasture. Perhaps we will have better luck there."

So Reddy tried to forget the emptiness of his stomach and actually had a nap, for he was very, very tired. When he awoke he felt better.

"Well, Granny," said he, "let's start for the Old Pasture. The snow has crusted over, and we won't find it such hard going as it was last night."

Granny arose and followed Reddy out to the doorstep. She walked stiffly. The truth is, she ached in every one of her old bones. At least, that is the way it seemed to her. She looked towards the Old Pasture. It seemed very far away. She sighed wearily. "I don't believe I'll go, Reddy," said she. "You run along and luck go with you."

Reddy turned and stared at Granny suspiciously. You know his is a very suspicious nature. Could it be that Granny had some secret plan of her own to get a meal and wanted to get rid of him?

"What's the matter with you?" he demanded roughly. "It was you who proposed going over to the Old Pasture."

Granny smiled. It was a sad sort of smile. She is wonderfully sharp and smart, is Granny Fox, and she knew what was in Reddy's mind as well as if he had told her.

"Old bones don't rest and recover as quickly as young bones, and I just don't feel equal to going over there now," said she. "The truth is, Reddy, I am growing old. I am going to stay right here and rest. Perhaps then I'll feel able to go hunting tonight. You

trot along now, and if you get more than a stomachful, just remember old Granny and bring her a bite."

There was something in the way Granny spoke that told Reddy she was speaking the truth. It was the very first time she ever had admitted that she was growing old and was no longer the equal of any fox. Never before had he noticed how gray she had grown. Reddy felt a feeling of shame creep over him—shame that he had suspected Granny of playing a sharp trick. And this little feeling of shame was followed instantly by a splendid thought. He would go out and find food of some kind, and he would bring it straight back to Granny. He had been taken care of by Granny when he was little, and now he would repay Granny for all she had done for him by taking care of her in her old age.

"Go back in the house and lie down, Granny," said he kindly. "I am going to get something, and whatever it may be you shall have your share." With this he trotted off towards the Old Pasture and somehow he didn't mind the ache in his stomach as he had before.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 13.)

STORY 1536. January 12, 1917

Three Vain and Foolish Wishes

There's nothing so foolishly silly and vain
As to wish for a thing you can never attain.

We all know that, yet most of us are just foolish enough to make such a wish now and then. I guess you have done it. I know I have. Peter Rabbit has done it often and then laughed at himself afterwards. I suspect that even shrewd, clever old Granny Fox has been guilty of it more than once. So it is not surprising that Reddy Fox, terribly hungry as he was, should do a little foolish wishing.

When he left home to go to the Old Pasture, in the hope that he would be able to find something to eat there, he started off bravely. It was cold, very cold indeed, but his fur coat kept him warm as long as he was moving. The Green Meadows were now no longer green but glistening—white with snow. All the world, at least all that part of it with which Reddy was acquainted, was white. It was beautiful, as millions of sparkles flashed in the sun. But Reddy had no thought for beauty; the only thought he had room for was to get something to put in the empty stomachs of himself and Granny Fox.

Jack Frost had hardened the snow so that Reddy no longer had to wade through it. He could run on it now without breaking through. This made it much easier, so he trotted along swiftly. He had intended to go straight to the Old Pasture, but there suddenly popped into his head a memory of the shelter down in a far corner of the Old Orchard which Farmer Brown's boy had built for Bob White[2]. Probably the Bob White family were there now, and he might surprise them. He would go there first.

Reddy stopped and looked carefully to make sure that Farmer Brown's boy

2 1915. STORY 1212.

and Bowser the Hound were nowhere in sight. Then he ran swiftly towards the Old Orchard. Just as he entered it he heard a merry voice just over his head. “Dee, dee, dee, dee!”

Reddy stopped and looked up. There was Tommy Tit the Chickadee clinging tightly to a big piece of fresh suet tied fast to a branch of a tree, and Tommy was stuffing himself. Reddy sat down right underneath that suet and looked up longingly. The sight of it made his mouth water so that it was almost more than he could stand. He jumped once. He jumped twice. He jumped three times. But all his jumping was in vain. That suet was beyond his reach. There was no possible way of reaching it save by flying or climbing. Reddy’s tongue hung out of his mouth with longing.

“I wish I could climb,” said Reddy.

But he couldn’t climb, and all the wishing in the world wouldn’t enable him to, as he very well knew. So after a little he started on. As he drew near the far corner of the Old Orchard, he saw Bob White and Mrs. Bob and all the young Bobs picking up grain which Farmer Brown’s boy had scattered for them just in front of the shelter he had built for them. Reddy crouched down and very slowly, an inch at a time, he crept forward, his eyes shining with eagerness. Just as he was almost within springing distance, Bob White gave a signal, and away flew the Bob Whites to the safety of a hemlock-tree on the edge of the Green Forest.

Tears of rage and disappointment welled up in Reddy’s eyes. “I wish I could fly,” he muttered, as he watched the brown birds disappear in the big hemlock-tree.

This was quite as foolish a wish as the other, so Reddy trotted on and decided to go down past the Smiling Pool. When he got there he found it, as he expected, frozen over. But just where the Laughing Brook joins it there was a little place where there was open water. Billy Mink was on the ice at its edge, and just as Reddy got there Billy dived in. A minute later he climbed out with a fish in his mouth.

“Give me a bite,” begged Reddy.

“Catch your own fish,” retorted Billy Mink. “I have to work hard enough for what I get as it is.”

Reddy was afraid to go out on the ice where Billy was, and so he sat and watched him eat that fine fish. Then Billy dived into the water again and disappeared. Reddy waited a long time, but Billy did not return. “I wish I could dive,” gulped Reddy, thinking of the fine fish somewhere under the ice.

And this wish was quite as vain and foolish as the other wishes.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 14)

STORY 1537. January 13, 1917

Reddy Fights a Battle

’Tis not the foes that are without

But those that are within
That give us battles that we find
The hardest are to win.

After the last of his three foolish wishes, Reddy Fox left the Smiling Pool and headed straight for the Old Pasture for which he had started in the first place. He wished now that he had gone straight there. Then he wouldn't have seen the suet tied out of reach to the branch of a tree in the Old Orchard; he wouldn't have seen the Bob Whites fly away to safety just as he felt almost sure of catching one; he wouldn't have seen Billy Mink bring a fine fish out of the water and eat it right before him. It is bad enough to be starving with no food in sight, but to be as hungry as Reddy Fox was and to see food just out of reach, to smell it, and not be able to get it is—well, it is more than most folks can stand patiently.

So Reddy Fox was grumbling to himself as he hurried to the Old Pasture and his heart was very bitter. It seemed to him that everything was against him. His neighbors had food, but he had none, not so much as a crumb. It was unfair. Old Mother Nature was unjust. If he could climb he could get food. If he could fly he could get food. If he could dive he could get food. But he could neither climb, fly, nor dive. He didn't stop to think that Old Mother Nature had given him some of the sharpest wits in all the Green Forest or on all the Green Meadows; that she had given him a wonderful nose; that she had given him the keenest of ears; that she had given him speed excelled by few. He forgot these things and was so busy thinking bitterly of the things he didn't have that he forgot to use his wits and nose and ears when he reached the Old Pasture. The result was that he trotted right past Old Jed Thumper, the big gray Rabbit, who was sitting behind a little bush holding his breath. The minute Old Jed saw that Reddy was safely past, he started for his bull-briar castle as fast as he could.

It was not until then that Reddy discovered him. Of course, Reddy started after him, and this time he made good use of his speed. But he was too late. Old Jed Thumper reached his castle with Reddy two jumps behind him. Reddy knew now that there was no chance to catch Old Jed that day, and for a few minutes he felt more bitter than ever. Then all in a flash Reddy Fox became the shrewd, clever fellow that he really is. He actually grinned.

"It's of no use to try to fill an empty stomach on wishes," said he.

"If I had come straight here and minded my own business, I'd have caught old Jed Thumper. Now I'm going to get something to eat and I'm not going home until I do."

Very wisely Reddy put all unpleasant thoughts out of his head and settled down to using his wits and his eyes and his ears and his nose for all they were worth, as Old Mother Nature had intended he should.

All through the Old Pasture he hunted, taking care not to miss a single place where there was the least chance of finding food. But it was all in vain. Reddy gulped down his disappointment.

"Now for the Big River," said he, and started off bravely.

Illustrations. January 8 to January 13, 1917.

1532. Chatterer Learns to Have Sympathy
"Phew!" he gasped. "I can't go out there."

1533. After the Storm
"It is good," mumbled Drummer, pecking away at the suet greedily.

1534. Granny and Reddy Fox Hunt in Vain
"Hard times these," said Peter, pleasantly.

1535. Granny Fox Admits Growing Old
"Go back in the house and lie down, Granny," said he kindly.

1536. Three Vain and Foolish Wishes
"Give me a bite," begged Reddy.

1537. Reddy Fights a Battle
In a minute he had that fish and was back on shore.

When he reached the edge of the Big River, he hurried along the bank until he reached a place where the water seldom freezes. As he had hoped, he found that it was not frozen now. It looked so black and cold that it made him shiver just to see it. Back and forth with his nose to the ground he ran. Suddenly he stopped and sniffed. Then he sniffed again. Then he followed his nose straight to the very edge of the Big River. There, floating in the black water, was a dead fish! By wading in he could get it.

Reddy shivered at the touch of the cold water, but what were wet feet compared with such an empty stomach as his? In a minute he had that fish and was back on the shore. It wasn't a very big fish, but it would stop the ache in his stomach until he could get something more. With a sigh of pure happiness, he sank his teeth into it and then—well, then he remembered poor Old Granny Fox. Reddy swallowed a mouthful and tried to forget Granny. But he couldn't. He swallowed another bit. Poor old Granny was back there at home as hungry as he was and too stiff and tired to hunt because she was growing old! Reddy choked. He stopped eating. Then Reddy began a great battle, a battle with himself. His stomach demanded that fish. If he ate it, no one would be the wiser. But Granny needed it even more than he did. For a long time Reddy fought with himself. In the end he picked up the fish and started for home.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 15)

STORY 1538. January 15, 1917

Reddy is Made Truly Happy

It's what you do for others,
  Not what they do for you,
That makes you feel so happy
  All through and through and through.

Reddy Fox ran all the way home from the Big River just as fast as he could go. In his mouth he carried the fish he had found and from which he had taken just two bites. You remember he had had a battle with himself over that fish, and now he was running away from himself. That sounds funny, doesn't it? But it was true. Yes, Sir, Reddy Fox was running away from himself. You see, he was afraid that if he didn't get home to Old Granny Fox with that fish very soon, he would eat every last bit of it himself. So he was running his very hardest so as to get there before this could happen. So really he was running away from himself, from his selfish self.

Old Granny Fox was on the doorstep watching for him, and he saw just how her hungry old eyes brightened when she saw him and what he had.

"I've brought you something to eat, Granny," he panted, as he laid the fish at her feet. He was quite out of breath with running. "It isn't much, but it is something. It is all I could find for you."

Granny looked at the fish and then she looked sharply at Reddy, and into those keen yellow eyes of hers crept a soft, tender look, such a look as you would never have believed they could have held.

“What have you had to eat?” asked Granny softly.

Reddy turned his head that Granny might not see his face. “Oh, I’ve had something,” said he, trying to speak lightly. It was true; he had had two bites from that fish.

Now you know just how shrewd and smart and wise Granny Fox is. Reddy didn’t fool her just the least little bit. She took two small bites from the fish.

“Now,” said she, “we’ll divide it,” and she bit what remained in two parts and in a twinkling had gulped down the smallest part, for you know she was very, very hungry. “That is your share,” said she, as she pushed what remained over to Reddy.

Reddy tried to refuse it. “I brought it all for you,” said he.

“I know you did, Reddy,” replied Granny, and it seemed to Reddy that he never had known her voice to sound so gentle. “You brought it to me when all you had had was the two little bites you had taken from it. You can’t fool me, Reddy Fox. There wasn’t one good meal for either of us in that fish, but there was enough to give us both a little hope and keep us from starving. Now you mind what I say and eat your share.” Granny said this last very sternly.

Reddy looked at Granny, and then he bolted down that little piece of fish without another word.

“That’s better,” said Granny. “We will feel better, both of us. Now that I’ve something in my stomach, I feel two years younger. Before you came, I didn’t feel as if I should ever be able to go on another hunt. If you hadn’t brought something, I—I’m afraid I couldn’t have lasted much longer. By another day you probably wouldn’t have had old Granny to think of. You may not know it, but I know that you saved my life, Reddy. I had reached a point where I just had to have a little food. You know there are times when a very little food is of more good than a lot of food could be later. This was one of those times.”

Never in all his life had Reddy Fox felt so truly happy. He was still hungry,—very, very hungry. But he gave it no thought. He had saved Granny Fox, good old Granny who had taught him all he knew. And he knew that Granny knew how he had had to fight with himself to do it. Reddy was happy through and through with the great happiness that comes from having done something for someone else.

“It was nothing,” he muttered.

“It was a very great deal,” replied Granny. And then she changed the subject. “How would you like to eat a dinner of Bowser the Hound’s?” she asked.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 16)

STORY 1539. January 16, 1917.

Granny Fox Promises Reddy Bowser’s Dinner

“How would you like to eat a dinner of Bowser the Hound’s?” asked Old Granny

Fox.

Reddy looked at her sharply to see if she were joking or really meant what she said. Granny looked so sober and so much in earnest that Reddy decided she couldn't be joking, even though it did sound that way.

"I certainly would like it, Granny. Yes, indeed, I certainly would like it," said he. "You—you don't suppose he will give us one, do you?"

Granny chuckled. "No, Reddy," said she. "Bowser isn't so generous as all that, especially to foxes. He isn't going to give us that dinner; we are going to take it away from him. Yes, Sir, we just naturally are going to take it away from him."

Reddy didn't for the life of him see how it could be possible to take a dinner away from Bowser the Hound. That seemed to him almost as impossible as it was for him to climb or fly or dive. But he had great faith in Granny's cleverness. He knew that all the time he had been away trying to find something for them to eat, old Granny Fox had been doing more than just rest her tired old bones. He knew that not for one single minute had her sharp wits been idle. He knew that all that time she had been studying and studying to find some way by which they could get something to eat. So great was his faith in Granny just then that if she had told him she would get him a slice of the moon he would have believed her.

"If you say we can take a dinner away from Bowser the Hound, I suppose we can," said Reddy, "though I don't see how. But if we can, let's do it right away. I'm hungry enough to dare almost anything for the sake of something to put in my stomach. It is so empty that little bit of fish we divided is shaking around as if it were lost. Gracious, I could eat a million fish the size of that one! Have you thought of Farmer Brown's hens, Granny?"

"Of course, Reddy! Of course! What a silly question!" replied Granny. "We may have to come to them yet."

"I wish I was at them right now," interrupted Reddy with a sigh.

"But you know what I have told you," went on Granny. "The surest way of getting into trouble is to steal hens. I'm not feeling quite up to being chased by Bowser the Hound just now, and if we came right home, we would give away the secret of where we live and might be smoked out, and that would be the end of us. Besides, those hens will be hard to get this weather, because they will stay in their house, and there is no way for us to get in there unless we walk right in, in broad daylight, and that would never do. It will be a great deal better to take Bowser's dinner away from him. In the first place, if we are careful, no one but Bowser will know about it, and as long as he is chained up, we will have nothing to worry about from him. Besides, we will enjoy getting even with him for the times he has spoiled our chances of catching a fat chicken and for the way he has hunted us. Most decidedly it will be better and safer to try for Bowser's dinner than to try for one of those hens."

"Just as you say, Granny; just as you say," returned Reddy. "You know best. But how under the sun we can do it beats me."

"It is very simple," replied Granny, "very simple indeed. Most things are simple enough when you find out how to do them. Neither of us could do it alone, but together we can do it without the least bit of risk. Listen."

Granny went close to Reddy and whispered to him, although there wasn't a soul within hearing. A slow grin spread over Reddy's face as he listened. When she had finished, he laughed right out.

"Granny, you are a wonder!" he exclaimed admiringly. "I never should have thought of that. Of course we can do it. My, won't Bowser be surprised! And how mad he'll be! Come on, let's be starting!"

"All right," said Granny, and the two started towards Farmer Brown's.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 17)

STORY 1540. January 17, 1917

Why Bowser the Hound Didn't Eat His Dinner

Bowser the Hound dearly loves to hunt just for the pleasure of the chase. It isn't so much the desire to kill as it is the pleasure of using that wonderful nose of his and the excitement of trying to catch some one, especially Granny or Reddy Fox. Since Farmer Brown's boy had put away his dreadful gun because, you know, he no longer wanted to kill the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, but rather to make them his friends, Bowser had missed the exciting hunts he used to enjoy so much with Farmer Brown's boy. So Bowser had formed the habit of slipping away alone for a hunt every once in a while. When Farmer Brown's boy discovered this, he got a chain and chained Bowser to his little house to keep him from running away and hunting on the sly.

Of course Bowser wasn't kept chained all the time. Oh, my, no! When his master was about, where he could keep an eye on Bowser, he would let him go free. But whenever he was going away and didn't want to take Bowser with him, he would chain Bowser up. Now Bowser always had one good big meal a day. To be sure, he had scraps or a bone now and then besides, but once a day he had one good big meal served to him in a large tin pan. If he happened to be chained, it was brought out to him. If not, it was given to him just outside the kitchen door.

Granny Fox knew all about this. Sly old Granny makes it her business to know the affairs of other people around her because there is no telling when such knowledge may be of use to her. So Granny had watched Bowser the Hound when he and his master had no idea at all that she was anywhere about, and she had found out his ways, the usual hour for his dinner and just how far that chain would allow him to go. It was such things which she had stored away in that shrewd old head of hers that made her so sure she and Reddy could take Bowser's dinner away from him.

It was just about Bowser's dinner time when Granny and Reddy trotted across the snow-covered fields and crept behind the barn until they could peep around the corner.

No one was in sight, not even Bowser, who was inside his warm little house at the end of the long shed back of Farmer Brown's house. Granny saw that he was chained and a sly grin crept over her face.

"You stay right here and watch until his dinner is brought out to him," said she to Reddy. "As soon as whoever brings it has gone back to the house you walk right out where Bowser will see you. At the sight of you, he'll forget all about his dinner. Sit right down where he can see you and stay there until you see that I have got that dinner, or until you hear somebody coming, for you know Bowser will make a great racket. Then slip around back of the barn and join me back of that shed."

So Reddy sat down to watch, and Granny left him. By and by Mrs. Brown came out of the house with a pan full of good things. She put it down in front of Bowser's little house and called to him. Then she turned and hurried back, for it was very cold. Bowser came out of his little house, yawned and stretched lazily.

It was time for Reddy to do his part. Out he walked and sat down right in front of Bowser and grinned at him. Bowser stared for a minute as if he doubted his own eyes. Such impudence! Bowser growled. Then with a yelp he sprang towards Reddy.

Now the chain that held him was long, but Reddy had taken care not to get too near, and of course Bowser couldn't reach him. He tugged with all his might and yelped and barked frantically, but Reddy just sat there and grinned in the most provoking manner. It was great fun to tease Bowser this way.

Meanwhile old Granny Fox had stolen out from around the corner of the shed behind Bowser. Getting hold of the edge of the pan with her teeth she pulled it back with her around the corner and out of sight. If she made any noise, Bowser didn't hear it. He was making too much noise himself and was too excited. Presently Reddy heard the sound of an opening door. Mrs. Brown was coming to see what all the fuss was about. Like a flash Reddy darted behind the barn, and all Mrs. Brown saw was Bowser tugging at his chain as he whined and yelped excitedly.

"I guess he must have seen a stray cat or something," said Mrs. Brown and went back in the house. Bowser continued to whine and tug at his chain for a few minutes. Then he gave it up and, growling deep in his throat, turned to eat his dinner. But there wasn't any dinner! It had disappeared, pan and all! Bowser couldn't understand it at all.

Back of the shed Granny and Reddy Fox licked that pan clean; licked it until it was polished. Then, with little sighs of satisfaction, and every once in a while a chuckle, they trotted happily home.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 18)

STORY 1541. January 18, 1917

Old Man Coyote Does a Little Thinking

Never in all his life had Reddy Fox enjoyed a dinner more than that one he and Granny had stolen from Bowser the Hound. Of course it would have tasted delicious

anyway, because they were so dreadfully hungry, but to Reddy it tasted better still because it had been intended for Bowser. You see Bowser has hunted Reddy so often that Reddy has no love for him at all, and it tickled him almost to death to think that they had taken his dinner from almost under his nose.

With that good dinner in their stomachs, Reddy and Granny Fox felt so much better that the world no longer seemed such a cold and cruel place. Funny how differently things look when your stomach is full from the way those same things look when it is empty. Best of all they knew they could play the same sharp trick again and steal another dinner from Bowser if need be.

It is a comforting feeling, a very comforting feeling, to know for a certainty where you can get another meal. It is a feeling that Granny and Reddy Fox and many other little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest seldom have in winter. As a rule, when they have eaten one meal, they haven't the least idea where the next one is coming from. How would you like to live that way?

The very next day Granny and Reddy went up to Farmer Brown's at Bowser's dinner hour. But this time Farmer Brown's boy was at work near the barn, and Bowser was not chained. Granny and Reddy stole away as silently as they had come. On the day following they found Bowser chained and stole another dinner from him; then they went away laughing until their sides ached as they heard Bowser's whines of surprise and disappointment when he discovered that his dinner had vanished. They knew by the sound of his voice that he hadn't the least idea what had become of that dinner.

Now there was someone else roaming over the snow-covered meadows and through the Green Forest and the Old Pasture these days with a stomach so lean and empty that he couldn't think of anything else. It was Old Man Coyote. You know he is very clever, is Old Man Coyote, and he managed to find enough food of one kind and another to keep him alive, but never enough to give him that comfortable feeling of a full stomach. While he wasn't actually starving, he was hungry all the time. So he spent all the time when he wasn't sleeping in hunting for something to eat.

Of course he often ran across the tracks of Granny and Reddy Fox, and once in a while he would meet them. It struck Old Man Coyote that they didn't seem as thin as he was. That set him to thinking. Neither of them was a smarter hunter than he. In fact, he prided himself on being smarter than either of them. Yet when he met them, they seemed to be in the best of spirits and not at all worried because food was so scarce. Why? There must be a reason. They must be getting food of which he knew nothing.

"I'll just keep an eye on them," muttered Old Man Coyote.

So very slyly and cleverly Old Man Coyote followed Granny and Reddy Fox, taking the greatest care that they should not suspect that he was doing it. All one night he followed them through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows, and when at last he saw them go home, appearing not at all worried because they had caught nothing, he trotted off to his own home to do some more thinking.

"They are getting food somewhere, that is sure," he muttered, as he scratched first one ear and then the other. Somehow he could think better when he was scratching his

ears. “If they don’t get it in the night, and they certainly didn’t get anything this night, they must get it in the daytime. I’ve done considerable hunting myself in the daytime, and I haven’t once met them in the Green Forest or seen them on the Green Meadows or up in the Old Pasture.

I wonder if they are stealing Farmer Brown’s hens and haven’t been found out yet. I’ve kept away from there myself, but if they can steal hens and not be caught, I certainly can. There never was a fox yet smart enough to do a thing that a coyote cannot do if he tries. I think I’ll slip up where I can watch Farmer Brown’s and see what is going on up there. Yes, Sir, that’s what I’ll do.”

With this, Old Man Coyote grinned and then curled himself up for a short nap, for he was tired.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 19)

STORY 1542. January 19, 1917.

A Twice Stolen Dinner

Three rogues set out one winter
  To try to steal a dinner.
Now two were red and one was gray;
  Which think you was the winner?

Listen and you shall hear all about it. Of course, the two in red were Granny and Reddy Fox, and of course, the one in gray was Old Man Coyote, the slyest, smartest rogues on all the Green Meadows or in all the Green Forest. All three had started out to steal the same dinner, but the funny part is they didn’t intend to steal it from the same person. And still funnier is it that one of them didn’t even know where that dinner was or what kind of a dinner it would be.

True to his resolve to know what Granny and Reddy Fox were getting to eat, and where they were getting it, Old Man Coyote hid where he could see what was going on about Farmer Brown’s, for it was there he felt sure that Granny and Reddy were getting food. He had waited only a little while when along came Granny and Reddy Fox past the place where Old Man Coyote was hiding. They didn’t see him. Of course not. He took care that they should have no chance. But anyway, they were not thinking of him. Their thoughts were all of that dinner they intended to have, and the smart trick by which they would get it.

So with their thoughts all on that dinner they slipped up behind the barn and prepared to work the trick which had been so successful before. Old Man Coyote crept after them. He saw Reddy Fox lie down where he could peep around the corner of the barn to watch Bowser the Hound and to see that no one else was about. He saw Granny leave Reddy there and hurry away. Old Man Coyote’s wits worked fast.

“I can’t be in two places at once,” thought he, “so I can’t watch both Granny and Reddy. As I can watch but one, which one shall it be? Granny, of course. Granny is the

Illustrations. January 15 to January 20, 1917.

1538. Reddy is Made Truly Happy
"I've brought you something to eat, Granny," he panted.

1539. Granny Fox Promises Reddy Bowser's Dinner
"Granny, you are a wonder!" he exclaimed admiringly.

1540. Why Bowser the Hound Didn't Eat His Dinner
But Reddy just sat there and grinned in the most provoking way.

1541. Old Man Coyote Does a Little Thinking
"I'll just keep an eye on them," muttered Old Man Coyote.

1542. A Twice Stolen Dinner
Granny let go of that dinner as if it burned her tongue.

1543. Granny and Reddy Talk Things Over
"Thief! Sneak! Coward!" snarled Reddy.

smartest of the two, and whatever they are up to, she is at the bottom of it. Granny is the one to follow."

So, like a gray shadow, crafty Old Man Coyote stole after Granny Fox and saw her hide behind the corner of the shed at the end of which was the little house of Bowser the Hound. He crept as near as he dared and then lay flat down behind a little bunch of dead grass close to the shed. For some time nothing happened, and Old Man Coyote was puzzled. Every once in a while Granny Fox would look behind and all about to be sure that no danger was near, but she didn't see Old Man Coyote. After what seemed to him a long time, he heard a door open on the other side of the shed. It was Mrs. Brown carrying Bowser's dinner out to him. Of course, Old Man Coyote didn't know this. He knew by the sounds that some one had come out of the house, and it made him nervous. He didn't like being so close to Farmer Brown's house in broad daylight. But he kept his eyes on Granny Fox, and he saw her ears prick up in a way that he knew meant that those sounds were just what she had been waiting for.

"If she isn't afraid, I don't need to be," thought he craftily. After a few minutes he heard a door close and knew that whoever had come out had gone back into the house. Almost at once Bowser the Hound began to yelp and whine. Swiftly Granny Fox disappeared around the corner of the shed. Just as swiftly Old Man Coyote ran forward and peeped around the corner. There was Bowser the Hound tugging at his chain, and just beyond his reach was Reddy Fox, grinning in the most provoking manner. And there was Granny Fox, backing and dragging after her Bowser's dinner. In a flash Old Man Coyote understood the plan, and he almost chuckled aloud at the cleverness of it. Then he hastily backed behind the shed and waited.

In a minute Granny Fox appeared, dragging Bowser's dinner after her. She was so intent on getting that dinner that she almost backed into Old Man Coyote without suspecting that he was anywhere about.

"Thank you, Granny. You needn't bother about it any longer; I'll take it now," growled Old Man Coyote in Granny's ear.

Granny let go of that dinner as if it burned her tongue, and with a frightened little yelp leaped to one side. A minute later Reddy came racing around from behind the barn eager for his share. What he saw was Old Man Coyote bolting down that twice-stolen dinner while Granny Fox fairly danced with rage.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 20)

STORY 1543, January 20, 1917

Granny and Reddy Talk Things Over

If ever two folks were mad away through, those two were Granny and Reddy Fox as they watched Old Man Coyote gobble up the dinner they had so cleverly stolen from Bowser the Hound. It was bad enough to lose the dinner, but it was worse to see someone else eat it after they had worked so hard to get it.

“Robber!” snarled Granny.

Old Man Coyote stopped eating long enough to grin.

“Thief! Sneak! Coward!” snarled Reddy.

Once more Old Man Coyote grinned. When that dinner had disappeared down his throat to the last and smallest crumb, he licked his chops and turned to Granny and Reddy.

“I’m very much obliged for that dinner,” said he pleasantly, his eyes twinkling with mischief. “It was the best dinner I have had for a long time. Allow me to say that that trick of yours was as smart a trick as ever I have seen. It was quite worthy of a Coyote. You are a very clever old lady, Granny Fox. Now I hear someone coming, and I would suggest that it will be better for all concerned if we are not seen about here.”

He darted off behind the barn like a gray streak, and Granny and Reddy followed, for it was true that someone was coming. You see Bowser the Hound had discovered that something was going on around the corner of the shed, and he made such a racket that Mrs. Brown had come out of the house to see what it was all about. By the time she got around there, all she saw was the empty pan in which Bowser’s dinner had been. She was puzzled. How that pan could be where it was she couldn’t understand, and Bowser couldn’t tell her, although he tried his very best.

Old Man Coyote lost no time in getting back home, for he never felt easy near the home of man in broad daylight. Granny and Reddy Fox went home too, and there was hate in their hearts—hate for Old Man Coyote. But once they reached home, Old Granny Fox stopped growling, and presently she began to chuckle.

“What are you laughing at?” demanded Reddy.

“At the way Old Man Coyote stole that dinner from us,” replied Granny.

“I hate him! He’s a sneaking robber!” snapped Reddy.

“Tut, tut, Reddy! Tut, tut!” retorted Granny. “Be fair minded. We stole that dinner from Bowser the Hound, and Old Man Coyote stole it from us. I guess he is no worse than we are, when you come to think it over. Now is he?”

“I—I—well, I don’t suppose he is, when you put it that way,” Reddy admitted grudgingly.

“And he was smart, very smart, to outwit two such clever people as we are,” continued Granny. “You will have to agree to that.”

“Y-e-s,” said Reddy slowly. “He was smart enough, but—”

“There isn’t any but, Reddy,” interrupted Granny. “You know the law of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest. It is everybody for himself, and anything belongs to one who has the wit or the strength to take it. We had the wit to take that dinner from Bowser the Hound, and Old Man Coyote had the wit to take it from us and the strength to keep it. It was all fair enough, and you know there isn’t the least use in crying over spilled milk, as the saying is. We simply have got to be smart enough not to let him fool

us again. I guess we won't get any more of Bowser's dinners for a while.

"We've got to think of some other way of filling our stomachs when the hunting is poor. I think if I could have just one of those fat hens of Farmer Brown's, it would put new strength into my old bones. All summer I warned you to keep away from that henyard, but the time has come now when I think we might try for a couple of those hens."

Reddy pricked up his ears at the mention of fat hens. "I think so too," said he. "When shall we try for one?"

"Tomorrow morning," replied Granny. "Now don't bother me while I think out a plan."

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 21)

STORY 1544. January 22, 1917

Granny Fox Plans to Get a Fat Hen

Full half success for Fox or Man
Is won by working out a plan.

Granny Fox knows this. No one knows it better. Whatever she does is first carefully planned in her wise old head. So now after she had decided that she and Reddy would try for one of Farmer Brown's fat hens, she lay down to think out a plan to get that fat hen. No one knew better than she how foolish it would be to go over to that henyard and just trust to luck for a chance to catch one of those biddies. Of course, they might be lucky and get a hen that way, but then again they might be unlucky and get in a peck of trouble.

"You see," said she to Reddy, "we must not only plan how to get that fat hen, but we must also plan how to get away with it safely. If only there was some way of getting in that henhouse at night, there would be no trouble at all. I don't suppose there is the least chance of that."

"Not the least chance in the world," replied Reddy. "There isn't a hole anywhere big enough for even Shadow the Weasel to get through, and Farmer Brown's boy is very careful to lock the door every night."

"There's a little hole that the hens go in and out of during the day, which is big enough for one of us to slip through, I believe," said Granny thoughtfully.

"Sure! But it's always closed at night," snapped Reddy. "Besides, to get to that or the door either, you have got to get inside the henyard, and there's a gate to that which we can't open."

"People are sometimes careless—even you, Reddy," said Granny.

Reddy squirmed uneasily, for he had been in trouble many times through carelessness. "Well, what of it?" he demanded a wee bit crossly.

"Nothing much, only if that hen-yard gate should happen to be left open, and if Farmer Brown's boy should happen to forget to close that little hole that the hens go through, and if we happened to be around at just that time—"

"Too many ifs to get a dinner with," interrupted Reddy.

"Perhaps," replied Granny mildly, "but I've noticed that it is the one who has an eye open for all the little ifs in life that fares the best. Now I've kept an eye on that henyard, and I've noticed that very often Farmer Brown's boy doesn't close the henyard gate at night. I suppose he thinks that if the henhouse door is locked, the gate doesn't matter. Anyone who is careless about one thing, is likely to be careless about another. Some time he may forget to close that hole. I told you that we would try for one of those hens tomorrow morning, but the more I think about it, the more I think it will be wiser to visit that henhouse a few nights before we run the risk of trying to catch a hen in broad daylight. In fact, I am pretty sure I can make Farmer Brown's boy forget to close that gate."

"How?" demanded Reddy eagerly.

Granny grinned. "I'll try it first and tell you afterwards," said she. "I believe Farmer Brown's boy closes the henhouse up just before jolly, round, red Mr. Sun goes to bed behind the Purple Hills, doesn't he?"

Reddy nodded. From a safe hiding-place he had hungrily watched Farmer Brown's boy shut the biddies up many times. It was always just before the Black Shadows began to creep out from their hiding places.

"I thought so," said Granny. The truth is, she knew so. There was nothing about that henhouse and what went on there that Granny didn't know quite as well as Reddy. "You stay right here this afternoon until I return. I'll see what I can do," she added.

"Let me go along," begged Reddy.

"No," replied Granny in such a decided tone that Reddy knew it would be of no use to tease. "Sometimes two can do what one cannot do alone, and sometimes one can do what two might spoil. Now we may as well take a nap until it is time for Mr. Sun to go to bed. Just you leave it to your old Granny to take care of the first of those ifs. For the other one we'll have to trust to luck, but you know we are lucky sometimes."

With this Granny curled up for a nap, and having nothing better to do, Reddy followed her example.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 22)

STORY 1545. January 23, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Didn't Close the Gate

How easy 'tis to just forget
  Until, alas, it is too late.
The most methodical of folks

Sometimes forget to shut the gate.

Farmer Brown's boy is not usually the forgetful kind. He is pretty good about not forgetting. But Farmer Brown's boy isn't perfect by any means. He does forget sometimes, and he is careless sometimes. He would be a funny kind of boy otherwise. But take it day in and day out, he is pretty thoughtful and careful.

The care of the hens is one of Farmer Brown's boy's duties. It is one of those duties which most of the time is a pleasure. He likes the biddies, and he likes to take care of them. Every morning one of the first things he does is to feed them and open the henhouse so that they can run in the henyard if they want to. Every night he goes out just before dark, collects the eggs and locks the henhouse so that no harm can come to the biddies while they are asleep on their roosts. After the big snowstorm he had shoveled a place in the henyard where the hens could come out and exercise and get a sun-bath when they wanted to, and in the very warmest part of the day they would do this. Always in the daytime he took the greatest care to see that the henyard gate was fastened, for no one knew better than he how bold Granny and Reddy Fox can be when they are very hungry, and in winter they are very apt to be very hungry most of the time. So he didn't intend to give them a chance to slip into that henyard while the biddies were out, or to give the biddies a chance to stray outside where they might be still more easily caught.

But at night he sometimes left that gate open, as Granny Fox had found out. You see, he thought it didn't matter because the hens were locked in their warm house and so were safe, anyway.

It was just at dusk of the afternoon of the day when Granny and Reddy Fox had talked over a plan to get one of those fat hens that Farmer Brown's boy collected the eggs and saw to it that the biddies had gone to roost for the night. He had just started to close the little sliding door across the hole through which the hens went in and out in the daytime when Bowser the Hound began to make a great racket, as if terribly excited about something.

Farmer Brown's boy gave the little sliding door a hasty push, picked up his basket of eggs, locked the henhouse door and hurried out through the gate without stopping to close it. You see, he was in a hurry to find out what Bowser was making such a fuss about. Bowser was yelping and whining and tugging at his chain, and it was plain to see that he was terribly eager to be set free.

"What is it, Bowser, old boy? Did you see something?" asked Farmer Brown's boy as he patted Bowser on the head. "I can't let you go, you know, because you probably would go off hunting all night and come home in the morning all tired out and with sore feet. Whatever it was, I guess you've scared it out of a year's growth, old fellow, so we'll let it go at that."

Bowser still tugged at his chain and whined, but after a little he quieted down. His master looked around behind the barn to see if he could see what had so stirred up Bowser, but nothing was to be seen, and he returned, patted Bowser once more, and went into the house, never once giving that open henyard gate another thought.

Half an hour later old Granny Fox joined Reddy Fox, who was waiting on the doorstep of their home. “It is all right, Reddy; that gate is open,” said she.

“How did you do it, Granny?” asked Reddy eagerly.

“Easily enough,” replied Granny. “I let Bowser get a glimpse of me just as his master was locking up the henhouse. Bowser made a great fuss, and of course, Farmer Brown’s boy hurried out to see what it was all about. He was in too much of a hurry to close that gate, and afterwards he forgot all about it or else he thought it didn’t matter. Of course, I didn’t let him get so much as a glimpse of me.”

“Of course,” said Reddy.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 23, “Farmer Brown’s Boy Forgets to Close the Gate”)

STORY 1546. January 24, 1917.

A Midnight Visit

It seemed to Reddy Fox as if time never had dragged so slowly as it did this particular night while he and Granny Fox waited until Granny thought it safe to visit Farmer Brown’s henhouse and see if by any chance there was a way of getting into it. Reddy tried not to hope too much. Granny had found a way to get the gate to the henyard left open, but this would do them no good unless there was some way of getting into the house, and this he very much doubted. But if there was a way he wanted to know it, and he was impatient to start.

But Granny was in no hurry. Not that she wasn’t just as hungry for a fat hen as was Reddy, but she was too wise and clever and altogether too sly to run any risks.

“There is nothing gained by being in too much of a hurry, Reddy,” said she, “and often a great deal is lost in that way. A fat hen will taste just as good a little later as it would now, and it will be foolish to go up to Farmer Brown’s until we are sure that everybody up there is asleep. But to ease your mind, I’ll tell you what we will do; we’ll go where we can see Farmer Brown’s house and watch until the last light winks out.”

So they trotted to a point where they could see Farmer Brown’s house, and there they sat down to watch. It seemed to Reddy that those lights never would wink out, but at last they did.

“Come on, Granny!” he cried, jumping to his feet.

“Not yet, Reddy. Not yet,” replied Granny. “We’ve got to give folks time to get sound asleep. If we should get into that henhouse, those hens might make a racket, and if anything like that is going to happen, we want to be sure that Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown’s boy are fast asleep.”

This was sound advice, and Reddy knew it. So with a groan he once more threw himself down on the snow to wait. At last Granny arose, stretched, and looked up at the twinkling stars. “Come on,” said she and led the way.

Up back of the barn and around it they stole like two shadows and quite as

noiselessly as shadows. They heard Bowser the Hound sighing in his sleep in his snug little house, and grinned at each other.

Silently they stole over to the henyard. The gate was open, just as Granny had told Reddy it would be. Across the henyard they trotted swiftly, straight to where more than once in the daytime they had seen the hens come out of the house through a little hole. It was closed. Reddy had expected it would be; still, he was dreadfully disappointed. He gave it merely a glance.

"I knew it wouldn't be any use," said he with a half whine.

But Granny paid no attention to him. She went close to the hole and pushed gently against the little door that closed it. It didn't move. Then she noticed that at one edge there was a tiny crack. She tried to push her nose through, but the crack was too narrow. Then she tried a paw. A claw caught on the edge of the door, and it moved ever so little. Then Granny knew that the little door wasn't fastened. Granny stretched herself flat on the ground and went to work, first with one paw, then with the other. By and by she caught her claws in it just right again, and it moved a wee bit more. No, most certainly that door wasn't fastened, and that crack was a little wider.

"What are you wasting your time there for?" demanded Reddy crossly. "We'd better be off hunting if we would have anything to eat this night."

Granny said nothing but kept on working. She had discovered that that crack was wide enough for her to get her nose in. Then she pushed and twisted her head this way and that. The little door slowly slid back, and when Reddy turned to speak to her again, for he had had his back to her, she was nowhere to be seen. Reddy just gaped and gaped foolishly. There was no Granny Fox, but there was a black hole where she had been working, and from it came the most delicious smell—the smell of fat hens! It seemed to Reddy that his stomach fairly flopped over with longing. He rubbed his eyes to be sure that he was awake. Then in a twinkling he was inside that hole himself.

"Sh-h-h, be still!" whispered Old Granny Fox.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 24)

STORY 1547. January 25, 1917

A Dinner for Two

Dark deeds are done in the stilly night,
And who shall say if they're wrong or right?

It all depends on how you look at things. Of course, Granny and Reddy Fox had no business to be in Farmer Brown's henhouse in the middle of the night, or at any other time, for that matter. That is, they had no business to be there, as Farmer Brown would look at the matter. He would have called them two red thieves. Perhaps that is just what they were. But looking at the matter as they did, I am not so sure about it. To Granny and Reddy Fox those hens were simply big, rather stupid birds, splendid eating if they could be caught, and bound to be eaten by somebody. The fact that they were in Farmer

Brown's henhouse didn't make them his anymore than the fact that Mrs. Grouse was in a part of the Green Forest owned by Farmer Brown made her his.

You see, among the little meadow and forest people there is no such thing as property rights, excepting in the matter of storehouses, and because these hens were alive, it didn't occur to Granny and Reddy that the henhouse was a sort of storehouse. It would have made no difference if it had. Among the little people it is considered quite right to help yourself from another's storehouse if you are smart enough to find it and really need the food.

Besides, Reddy and Granny knew that Farmer Brown and his boy would eat some of those hens themselves, and they didn't begin to need them as Reddy and Granny did. So as they looked at the matter, there was nothing wrong in being in that henhouse in the middle of the night. They were there simply because they needed food very, very much, and food was there.

They stared up at the roosts where the biddies were huddled together, fast asleep. They were too high up to be reached from the floor even when Reddy and Granny stood on their hind legs and stretched as far as they could.

"We've got to wake them up and scare them so that some of the silly things will fly down where we can catch them," said Reddy, licking his lips hungrily.

"That won't do at all!" snapped Granny. "They would make a great racket and waken Bowser the Hound, and he would waken his master, and that is just what we mustn't do if we hope to ever get in here again. I thought you had more sense, Reddy."

Reddy looked a little shamefaced.

"Well, if we don't do that, how are we going to get them? We can't fly," he grumbled.

"You stay right here where you are," snapped Granny, "and take care that you don't make a sound."

Then Granny jumped lightly to a little shelf that ran along in front of the nesting boxes. From this she could reach the lower roost on which four fat hens were asleep. Very gently she pushed her head in between two of these and crowded them apart. Sleepily they protested and moved along a little. Granny continued to crowd them. At last one of them stretched out her head to see who was crowding so. Like a flash Granny seized that head, and biddy never knew what had wakened her, nor did she have a chance to waken the others.

Dropping this hen at Reddy's feet, Granny crowded another until she did the same thing, and just the same thing happened once more. Then Granny jumped lightly down, picked up one of the hens by the neck, slung the body over her shoulder, and told Reddy to do the same with the other and start for home.

"Aren't you going to get any more while we have the chance?" grumbled Reddy.

"Enough is enough," retorted Granny. "We've got a dinner for two, and so far no one is any the wiser. Perhaps these two won't be missed, and we'll have a chance to get

some more another night. Now come on."

This was plain common sense, and Reddy knew it, so without another word he followed old Granny Fox out by the way they had entered, and then home to the best dinner he had had for a long, long time.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 25)

STORY 1548. January 26, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Sets a Trap

Granny Fox had hoped that those two hens she and Reddy had stolen from Farmer Brown's henhouse would not be missed, but they were. They were missed the very first thing the next morning when Farmer Brown's boy went to feed the biddies. He discovered right away that the little sliding door which should have closed the opening through which the hens went in and out of the house was open, and then he remembered that he had left the henyard gate open the night before. Carefully Farmer Brown's boy examined the hole with the sliding door.

"Ha!" said he presently, and held up two red hairs which he had found on the edge of the door. "Ha! I thought as much. I was careless last night and didn't fasten this door, and I left the gate open. Reddy Fox has been here, and now I know what has become of those two hens. I suppose it serves me right for my carelessness, and I suppose if the truth were known, those hens were of more real good to him than they ever could have been to me, because the poor fellow must be having pretty hard work to get a living these hard winter days. Still, I can't have him stealing any more. That would never do at all. Of course, if I shut them up every night and am not careless, he can't get them. But accidents will happen, and I might do just as I did last night—think I had locked up when I hadn't. I don't like to set a trap for Reddy, but I must teach the rascal a lesson. If I don't, he will get so bold that those chickens won't be safe even in broad daylight."

Now at just that very time over in their home, Granny and Reddy Fox were talking over plans for the future, and shrewd old Granny was pointing out to Reddy how necessary it was that they should keep away from that henyard for some time.

"We've had a good dinner, a splendid dinner, and if we are smart enough, we may be able to get more good dinners where this one came from," said she. "But we certainly won't if we are too greedy."

"But I don't believe Farmer Brown's boy has missed those two chickens, and I don't see any reason at all why we shouldn't go back there tonight and get two more if he is stupid enough to leave that gate and little door open," whined Reddy.

"Maybe he hasn't missed those two, but if we should take two more, he certainly would miss them, and he would guess what had become of them, and that might get us into no end of trouble," snapped Granny. "We are not starving now, and the best thing for us to do is to keep away from that henhouse until we can't get anything to eat anywhere else, Now you mind what I tell you, Reddy, and don't you dare go near

there."

Reddy promised, and so it came about that Farmer Brown's boy hunted up a trap all for nothing so far as Reddy and Granny were concerned. Very carefully he bound strips of cloth around the jaws of the trap, for he couldn't bear to think of those cruel jaws cutting into the leg of Reddy, should he happen to get caught. You see, Farmer Brown's boy didn't intend to kill Reddy if he should catch him, but to make him a prisoner for a while and so keep him out of mischief.

That night he hid the trap very cunningly just inside the henhouse where anyone creeping through that little hole made for the hens to go in and out would be sure to step in it. Then he purposely left the little sliding door open part way as if it had been forgotten, and he also left the henyard gate open just as he had done the night before.

"There now, Master Reddy," said he, talking to himself, "I rather think that you are going to get into trouble before morning."

And doubtless Reddy would have done just that thing but for the wisdom of sly old Granny.

(*Old Granny Fox*, Chapter 26)

STORY 1549[3]. January 27, 1917

Old Man Coyote Discovers Feathers

Old Man Coyote had been keeping an eye on Granny and Reddy Fox. Ever since he had discovered the clever trick by which they had stolen the dinners of Bowser the Hound he had had more respect for them than ever before. The fact was they had been able to get something to eat when he couldn't and it rather hurt his pride. So, from that time on he kept a watchful eye on Granny and Reddy Fox when he could, so as to know what they were about.

The very next morning after Granny and Reddy Fox had eaten that fine chicken dinner, Old Man Coyote strolled around past their house as if merely out for a walk. He was still some little distance from their house when his sharp eyes caught sight of something that made him stop and take notice. It was a feather, just a little downy feather. If you had been there and seen it, you wouldn't have thought anything about it. Neither would I. But right on the instant Old Man Coyote was suspicious. Yes, sir, he was suspicious. You see, he knew that that feather had come from a hen. But what did a hen's feather mean way out there so far from the barnyard?

"Ha!" said Old Man Coyote.

He trotted on a bit farther, his eyes more widely open than before, and presently he saw another feather. "Ho!" said Old Man Coyote.

He trotted on still farther with his eyes just as widely open as they could be and presently he saw just ahead of him the house of Granny and Reddy Fox. All about the doorstep were feathers, a great many feathers. "Ha, ha! Ho, ho!" exclaimed Old Man

3 This story was not included in *Old Granny Fox*.

Coyote. “Ha, ha! Ho, ho! Ho, ho! Ha, ha! I thought as much. Those Foxes have found a way into Farmer Brown’s henhouse. Now if they can get into that henhouse I can. But I should much prefer to have them take the risk for me. If they got away with a hen or two last night without any trouble, and it looks to me as if they most certainly did, they probably will try again tonight. If they don’t tonight they will tomorrow night. I’ll just watch that her house. That’s what I’ll do. When they come out with a fat hen I’ll be right there and I’ll invite them to give that fat hen to me, and I’m quite sure they’ll be ever so glad to do so, because they can go right back and get another for themselves.”

Old Man Coyote grinned wickedly. You see he knew that Granny and Reddy feared him because he was a little bigger and a little stronger than either of them and his teeth were a little longer and a little fiercer looking than theirs. So he knew that if he should meet them with a hen and ask them for it, they could give it to him, not because they wanted to, but because they would be afraid not to.

So chuckling to himself Old Man Coyote trotted off home to wait for the coming of night. And he didn’t know that peering out from her doorway Old Granny Fox watched him and guessed just what was in his mind and in her turn chuckled.

“What are you laughing about?” demanded Reddy, who had not seen Old Man Coyote.

“Old Man Coyote has just paid us the honor of a visit,” replied Granny.

“I don’t see anything to laugh at in that,” said Reddy.

“He saw those feathers outside,” replied Granny, “and the old sinner has gone off with an idea in his head.”

“What idea?” asked Reddy.

“An idea that he is going to let us catch a hen for him,” replied Granny. And that is one more reason why we will stay away from that hen yard for a while.”

Then Reddy understood and he began to chuckle, too.

STORY 1550[4]. January 29, 1917

Old Man Coyote Waits in Vain

There’s nothing that I know of harder
Than patience with an empty larder.

A larder, you know, is a place where food is kept. Your mother’s larder is her pantry and icebox. Happy Jack’s larder is the place where he has stored away nuts for the Winter. Old Man Coyote’s larder is—well, the truth is, it is his stomach most of the time. It is only once in a while that he has more than he can eat, and after he has eaten all he can, hides the rest for another meal. Not once since the cold weather came had there been a single thing in that secret hiding place, and much of the time there hadn’t been much in Old Man Coyote’s stomach either.

4 This story was not included in *Old Granny Fox*.

Illustrations. January 22 to January 27, 1917.

1544. Granny Fox Plans to Get a Fat Hen
From a safe hiding place he watched Farmer Brown's Boy shut the biddies up.

1545. Farmer Brown's Boy Didn't Close the Gate
Up back of the barn and around it they stole like two shadows.

1546. A Midnight Visit
"It's all right, Reddy; that gate is open," said she.

1547. A Dinner for Two
They stared up at the roost where the biddies were huddled together.

1548. Farmer Brown's Boy Sets a Trap
"I was careless last night and didn't fasten this door."

1549. Old Man Coyote Discovers Feathers
Granny Fox watched him and guessed just what was in his mind.

This night his stomach was quite as empty as his hiding place.

"I feel hollow clear to my toenails," he muttered as he trotted swiftly toward Farmer Brown's henhouse. "I hope Granny and Reddy Fox will come early. They certainly would if they were as hungry as I am, but, of course, they aren't, because they had a chicken dinner last night. My, my, my, a chicken dinner! The very thought of it makes my stomach ache with longing. Well, if they catch any more fat hens tonight I'll put an end to that ache or my name is not Old Man Coyote."

You see he felt sure that Granny and Reddy Fox, having succeeded in getting a good dinner the night before in Farmer Brown's henhouse, would not be able to resist the temptation to try to get another that night, and if they did he meant to take it away from them. The clever old sinner didn't intend to take any risks by going into that henhouse himself. So he trotted swiftly across the snow-covered Green Meadows under the twinkling stars straight up to Farmer Brown's, and there close by the henhouse in the blackest of the Black Shadows he hid to watch for the coming of Granny and Reddy Fox, and not a doubt that they would come entered his head.

Now, with all his cleverness, Old Man Coyote wasn't clever enough to think that wee old Granny Fox was herself too clever to do such a foolish thing as to visit that henhouse two nights in succession. So while his stomach ached with emptiness and longing and while he shivered and shook with the cold through the dragging hours there was no sign of Granny or Reddy Fox, for the very good reason that they were hunting over in the Green Forest. At last Old Man Coyote could stand it no longer. Stiffly he got to his feet.

"They're not coming," he muttered crossly. "If I am to have a fat hen. I've got to get it myself. Well, if they could do it I can I suppose I'll have to take the risk."

He stole around to the gate of the hen yard. It was open. Suspiciously he smelled all about before entering. Everything seemed safe. He crept across the yard to the little hole in the henhouse through which the biddies pass in the daytime. The little sliding door was only partly closed. He pushed his head in and the door slid back just as it had done the night before for Granny Fox. Old Man Coyote took a long sniff and his mouth watered with longing, for his nose was filled with the scent of many fat hens.

"Hurry up and slip in and get one," whispered his stomach.

"Take care! Take care! Don't do anything rash," whispered Caution. "This seems altogether too easy to be safe."

Old Man Coyote is altogether too smart and clever to let his stomach lead him into trouble. He sniffed again and then once more very, very carefully. Then with a long sigh of disappointment he turned tail and trotted away. He had smelled the trap which Farmer Brown's boy had set.

"Anyway, I wouldn't have had a fat hen even if those foxes had come," muttered Old Man Coyote, "for one of them would have got caught in that trap. It certainly is hard to be so near and yet so far from a good dinner. But such is life."

STORY 1551[5]. January 30, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Forgets

O, deary me, that little habit
  That you and I and Peter Rabbit
And everybody else confesses
  That he or she at times possesses!
That habit of so often letting
  Thoughts go straying and-forgetting!

What a lot of trouble that little habit makes! I don't know of any that makes more trouble. We forget to do something that we ought to do, or we forget not to do something that we ought not to do and then all sort of unpleasant things happen. If no one ever forgot the things that they shouldn't forget Old Mr. Trouble wouldn't find half so much to do.

Farmer Brown's boy is pretty good about not forgetting, but he is just like the rest of us and does forget sometimes. You remember that it was because he forgot to shut the hen yard gate that Granny and Reddy Fox were able to get that good dinner of fat hens.

He meant, he honestly and truly meant, that that should be a lesson to him and that never again would he be so careless as to forget. But you know how it is—so hard to remember and so easy to forget. It was just so with Farmer Brown's boy. He is just like the rest of us, and that is one reason I like him.

Of course, you remember how the very next night after that visit from Granny and Reddy Fox he carefully set a trap just inside the little hole through which the biddies pass in and out of the hen house, and then left that little hole partly open so that if Reddy and Granny should come back for another fat hen that night they would be tempted to enter and would step right in that trap. And you haven't forgotten how they decided to keep away from that hen house for a while, nor how Old Man Coyote came and discovered that trap. The next morning Farmer Brown's boy hurried out to the hen house bright and early to see if he had caught Reddy Fox. As soon as he entered the yard, he saw that the little sliding door that closes the hole where the trap was set was pushed back, and he felt sure that when he opened the hen house door he would find Reddy a prisoner inside.

Of course, he didn't. Of course, he was disappointed. At the same time, he was rather glad. The only reason he wanted to catch Reddy was to keep him a prisoner for a while to teach him that he must keep away from those hens. When he saw that the trap was just as he had left it the night before he started about his usual morning duty of feeding the biddies and seeing to it that they had plenty of fresh water to drink. When he had done these things, he would take up that trap. At least that is what he intended to do.

But just as he finished his work the breakfast bell rang, and, being a real live boy

5 This story was not included in *Old Granny Fox*.

with a real live boy's appetite, he hurried to the house without another thought of that trap. You see, at the sound of that bell he had no room for any thoughts save of his stomach. Right in the middle of his breakfast there broke out a terrible racket, such a cackling and squawking and screaming as only a lot of frightened hens can make.

Farmer Brown's boy jumped up from the table in such a hurry that he upset his glass of milk. "Something is after those hens!" he cried and rushed out of the house and straight for the henhouse as fast as he could go. That fox must have stolen in there while we were eating breakfast," he muttered. "Probably he's in that trap and the hens are frightened half to death."

He threw open the door and rushed inside fully expecting to see Reddy Fox a prisoner in his trap. What he did see was Dandycock, the big rooster, flopping about helplessly, all his dignity gone as he squawked at the top of his lungs, and all the hens gathered around him, cackling with fear.

In a flash Farmer Brown's boy knew what had happened. Dandycock had started to go out through that hole as usual and had stepped in that trap! Fortunately, he was more frightened than hurt, for the jaws of the trap had been wound with strips of cloth to keep them from hurting any more than necessary.

This is what comes of forgetting," muttered Farmer Brown's boy as he set Dandycock free and took the trap away. "Wouldn't Reddy Fox laugh if he could know what happened."

And Reddy certainly would have.

STORY 1552. January 31, 1917

Peter Rabbit Rubs His Eyes

Isn't it funny that when you are very much surprised by seeing something which you haven't dreamed of seeing you so often begin right away to wonder if there is anything wrong with your eyes. It is hard to believe that what they tell you can be so. It is just this way with Peter Rabbit every once in a while. Peter's eyes are fairly good. They are not as good as the eyes of Roughleg the Hawk. Oh, my, no. They are not as keen as the eyes of several I might mention. But for all of Peter's needs they are very good eyes. There is nothing the matter with them; not a thing. But every once in a while Peter almost thinks there is. At least he wonders if there may not be. Then he rubs them and rubs them and after he has got through rubbing them if he sees just as before he makes up his mind that they are all right, and are not playing tricks on him.

It was a nice warm winter day. You know there are some warm days even in those parts of the country where rough Brother North Wind and Jack Frost claim to rule the winter through. This was one those days. Jolly, round Mr. Sun was shining the very best he could. Of course in winter his smile isn't anything like so warm as it is in summer, but still it can be quite warm if rough Brother North Wind and Jack Frost do not happen to be anywhere about. Of course Peter should have been at home in the dear Old Briar Patch, but he wasn't. He was over in the Green Forest.

He was hopping along, lipperty-lipperty-lip, with nothing in particular on his mind when he came to a certain old stump on which the bark hung in great loose pieces. It was for all the world like an old beggar in rags. Now Peter had seen that old stump many, many times, and he would hardly have glanced at it this time but for a strange thing. Right on the top of it, where the Jolly Little Sunbeams were brightest and warmest, something moved.

Now Peter, like all the other little people of the Green Meadows and Green Forest, is always Interested in anything that moves. If a thing moves it is always safest, to look twice to make sure what it is, whether it moved of itself, or whether something or somebody made it move. Ever and ever so many times Peter has discovered danger just by noticing the moving of a leaf.

So the instant Peter saw something move on the top of that old stump he stopped and sat up, looking with all his might. At first he thought it was a dead leaf fluttering there. Then he decided that it was too black to be a leaf, for a dead leaf usually is brown. Besides, there wasn't so much as a breath of wind to make it move. Suddenly it went up in the air a little way and then settled back on the top of the old stump. Peter caught his breath with a funny little gasp. Then what do you think he did? Well, he rubbed his eyes and he rubbed his eyes and he rubbed his eyes. He felt sure that this time beyond a doubt his eyes were paying him tricks.

"They must be!" exclaimed Peter and rubbed them harder than ever. Then once more he stared and he saw just what he had seen before.

"I certainly cannot see what cannot be," said he, and rubbed his eyes harder than ever. But rub as he would, he couldn't make those two eyes see any differently.

"It isn't true because it can't be true. I never heard of such a thing," said Peter. Then he closed his eyes and kept them closed for what seemed to him a long time. When he opened them again, he saw just what he had seen before. Then Peter started off as fast as he could go, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip. He was going to look for someone of whom to ask questions.

STORY 1553. February 1, 1917

Jimmy Skunk Relieves Peter Rabbit

Lipperty-lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty- lipperty-lipperty-lip hurried Peter Rabbit through the Green Forest. He wanted to find someone, it didn't much matter, whom, so long as it was some one of whom he did not have to live in fear. So, as Peter ran he looked this way and he looked that way; he looked up and he looked all around about.

My eyes are playing tricks on me,
  I'm sure of that as I can be;
I've seen a thing which can't be so,
  Which proves my eyes are wrong, you know.

So said Peter to himself as he hurried along. He went some distance without seeing

anybody. “It’s a funny old world,” muttered Peter. “When you want to meet somebody, nobody is about. When you don’t want to meet anybody you meet someone every way you turn. It’s a funny old world. It’s a funny old world

“What are you talking to yourself about, Peter?” demanded a voice which came from a hollow log which Peter was passing.

It was so unexpected that it startled Peter so that he made a flying leap sideways. Then he whirled and sat up looking very foolish, for he recognized that voice.

“It isn’t fair to scare a fellow almost to death like that, Jimmy Skunk!” said he severely. “Where are you, anyway?”

“Right here,” replied Jimmy Skunk, poking his head out from the end of the hollow log and grinning at Peter.

Peter grinned back, for he and Jimmy are very good friends. “I was looking for you,” declared Peter. “I mean I was looking for somebody, and you will do as well as anyone. I want you to come right along with me, Jimmy, and come quickly.”

Jimmy Skunk grinned more broadly than ever. “Why this dreadful hurry, Peter? You know I never, hurry,” said he.

“I know that, you old lazy bones,” retorted Peter. “But you’ve got to hurry this time. You really must. Come on!”

Jimmy yawned and slowly came out of the hollow log. He brushed his handsome black and white coat and shook out his big plumy tail. “Why must I come with you?” he demanded good naturedly.

“Because I’ve just seen something that can’t possibly be and I want you to see it, cried Peter impatiently.

Jimmy laughed right out. “In that case I guess I’ll have to come,” said he. “I’ve never yet seen anything that couldn’t be, and it must be very interesting. I’ll come, Peter, but you mustn’t expect me to hurry. You know I never hurry. I won’t hurry now, not even to see something that cannot be,” Jimmy chuckled.

Peter turned and led the way back toward the old stump where he had seen the thing which had puzzled him so and had made him rub his eyes to make sure that there was nothing the matter with them. He was in a dreadful hurry. You see he was afraid that the thing might not be there. But Jimmy Skunk wouldn’t hurry in spite of all that Peter could say.

At last they came in sight of the old stump. Peter scampered ahead, lipperty-lipperty-lip, and looked up at the top of it eagerly. Then he gave a funny little sigh of relief. The same thing he had seen before was on top of it, moving gently in the sunshine. “Hurry, Jimmy! Hurry!” called Peter.

At last Jimmy arrived. Peter pointed to the top of the tall old stump. “Do you see anything up there?” he asked eagerly. Even as he spoke something fluttered up in the air and then dropped back on the old stump again.

Jimmy Skunk's eyes brightened. "I see a butterfly, if that is what you mean," said he.

Peter jumped up in the air and kicked his long heels together happily. "Then it IS a butterfly, and there isn't anything the matter with my eyes!" he cried.

"Of course it's a butterfly. Whatever is the matter with you, Peter?" grunted Jimmy.

"Nothing." replied Peter, "only who ever heard of a butterfly in the middle of Winter."

STORY 1554. February 2, 1917

Peter Rabbit Gains Wealth

Each day that you learn something new
  You're richer than the day before:
For knowledge is a form of wealth
  That's in demand the wide world o'er.

"Who ever heard of butterflies in the middle of Winter?" repeated Peter Rabbit in such a funny tone of voice that Jimmy Skunk laughed right out. You see, Jimmy knew by the sound that Peter was trying very hard to believe something which he felt he just had to believe, and at the same time felt that he just couldn't believe. Perhaps you know what that feeling is. He had to believe because up on top of a tall stump in front of him was a really, truly butterfly opening and shutting its wings. When he first saw it, Peter was sure that his eyes were playing him tricks, but when he led Jimmy Skunk there and Jimmy saw the same thing Peter knew that there could be no mistake.

"Fie, Peter I'm ashamed of you. I really am, Peter," said Jimmy Skunk "Where have you kept your eyes? How anyone could live in the Green Forest as long as you have and not know that there are butterflies in Winter is more than I can understand. Why, I have found them any number of times and eaten them, too."

"Oh, Jimmy!" cried Peter, very much shocked. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself. The idea of eating a pretty butterfly! It's dreadful."

"No more dreadful than eating a fat beetle," retorted Jimmy. "A butterfly is nothing but a kind of bug, and when a fellow is hungry he isn't particular what kind of bugs he eats. There isn't much to a butterfly, but if there happens to be enough of them they aren't so bad."

"Just the same. I think it is a shame to kill the pretty butterflies. There is no accounting for tastes." Peter spoke with such an air, such a funny air of considering himself so much better than Jimmy, that Jimmy had to laugh.

"That's so, Peter," said he. "For my part I never could understand how anyone could eat bark and kill pretty trees."

"I—I—I—" Peter stopped. He couldn't find a word to say. He did eat bark, and sometimes he did kill trees, although he never had thought of that before. When food is

very scarce in Winter Peter gnaws the bark from young trees and when, as sometimes happens, he eats all the bark he can reach all the way around a little tree that little tree dies.

Jimmy was still chuckling. “Never mind, Peter,” said he. “Everybody to his own taste. You like bark and I like butterflies when nothing else is to be found, though I prefer fat beetles just as you prefer sweet clover. Anyway, you are richer than you were yesterday.”

Peter blinked in a puzzled way. “I didn’t know it, but if you say I am I suppose I am,” said he.

“Of course you are,” returned Jimmy. “You’ve learned something. You know something you didn’t know before. That is knowledge and knowledge is the best kind of wealth.”

Peter pulled his whiskers thoughtfully. “I suppose you mean that I have learned that there are butterflies in Winter,” said he.

Jimmy nodded.

“I always supposed that Jack Frost killed all the butterflies,” continued Peter, “and it is hard work not to believe it even now. Where has that fellow up there on top of that stump been all the time?”

“Behind one of those loose pieces of bark hanging to that stump,” replied Jimmy promptly. “If we could get up there and pull that bark off, we probably would find some more. Jack Frost does kill most butterflies, but this is one kind he doesn’t. They sleep just as Johnny Chuck does all Winter, waking up once in a while when Mr. Sun shines on their sleeping place as he is doing now. As soon as Mr. Sun moves on that butterfly up there will crawl back under the bark and go to sleep again. I’ve found them lots of times in old stumps and under old logs. See, there he goes now!”

Peter looked, and sure enough that butterfly was crawling under one of the pieces of loose bark.

“Isn’t it wonderful?” gasped Peter.

“Everything is wonderful,” replied Jimmy Skunk, “if only you have eyes to see and use them.”

Then Jimmy Skunk chuckled. “Don’t you know that this is Johnny Chuck’s day?” he asked.

“What do you mean by Johnny Chuck’s day?” Peter’s eyes were very wide open with curiosity.

“Why, I thought everyone knew that,” replied Jimmy Skunk, still chuckling. “This is the day that Johnny Chuck is supposed to wake up and come out to see what time of year it is and how much longer he has got to sleep.”

Peter looked more puzzled than ever. He pulled his whiskers. Then he scratched his long left ear with his long right hindfoot. After this he scratched his long right ear

with his long left hindfoot. All the time Jimmy Skunk watched him and kept chuckling to himself. At last Peter found his tongue once more.

"How," he asked, "can Johnny Chuck know how much longer he has got to sleep?"

"I don't know that he can," replied Jimmy Skunk. "All I know is what people say."

"Well, what do they say?" asked Peter very impatiently.

"They say," said Jimmy, "that if Johnny comes out today and sees his shadow, he will know that there will be six weeks' more of Winter and so he will promptly go back to bed to sleep six weeks more. If he doesn't see his shadow, he will know that sweet Mistress Springtime will come early and so he will not have to sleep so long. I thought everybody knew that."

"I didn't," replied Peter. "Do you believe it, Jimmy Skunk?"

"I won't say I believe it, but still it may be so," replied Jimmy with a twinkle in his eyes. "I can't say that I ever have seen him awake at this time of year, but then I never have wasted my time watching his house all day. He might come out a dozen times without being seen by me."

"Did you ever ask him if it is true?" inquired Peter very earnestly.

"No," replied Jimmy, yawning. "I never was enough interested. What Johnny Chuck may do today won't make the Winter any longer or any shorter. It doesn't bother me one way er the other."

"But it would be so nice to know just how much more Winter there is going to be," said Peter thoughtfully. "I don't see what Johnny Chuck's shadow can possibly have to do with it, but there are lots of things I don't understand. Do you suppose he really will come out today?"

A sudden thought popped into Jimmy Skunk's head and his eyes twinkled with mischief. He turned away his head to hide a grin which he just couldn't help. When he looked back at Peter it was with as sober a face as ever was.

"I haven't the least idea, Peter," said he, "but why don't you watch and find out? It is so early in the morning now that I don't believe he has come out yet, so why don't you hurry over to his house and watch. If he comes out, you can tell the rest of us whether or not he saw his shadow. I've got to move along now, but I'll drop around this way tomorrow to find out what you may have seen. You better hurry up there right away."

With this Jimmy Skunk turned and ambled up the Crooked Little Path and chuckled to himself all the way. Peter watched him out of sight. Then suddenly he made up his mind. "I believe I'll do it," said he, and started for the Old Orchard, where Johnny Chuck's house is lipperty-lipperty-lip, as fast as he could go.

STORY 1555. February 3, 1917

Peter Rabbit Watches and Is Watched

Lipperty-lipperty-lip ran Peter Rabbit straight to the Old Orchard, in the far corner of which was the house of Johnny Chuck. It was early, very early in the morning, as Jimmy Skunk had said. In fact, it was so early that Peter had been on his way to his home in the dear Old Brier Patch when he met Jimmy Skunk. You know Peter is quite a hand to stay out all night, usually getting home just about the time jolly Mr. Sun begins his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky. So it was quite likely, as Jimmy had said, that Johnny Chuck hadn't come out as yet to look for his shadow, even supposing that he really did such a thing on the one particular day of the year, which is known as "Groundhog Day," Groundhog being Just another name for Johnny Chuck.

As he ran Peter thought over all that Jimmy Skunk had told him of how it was said that Johnny Chuck was in the habit of coming out on this day to find out how much longer Winter would last. If he should see his shadow it would mean six weeks more of Winter, but if no shadow was to be seen it would mean that the Winter was almost over, according to what Johnny Chuck had said.

"That's a funny idea," thought Peter. "What has Johnny Chuck's shadow got to do with the Winter, any more than my shadow, or Jimmy Skunk's shadow, or the shadow of anybody else? And why should he wake up one day any more than any other day? It doesn't sound reasonable, and yet—and yet—well, if people say it is so, perhaps it is so. Any way, it will harm no one if I watch and find out for myself." You see, Peter is very like a great many other people—ready to believe anything, even though his common sense whispers that it cannot be so.

When he reached the Old Orchard Peter went straight to Johnny Chuck's house. There were no footprints on the doorstep so Peter knew that Johnny could not have come out yet and he gave a little sigh of relief. Then he picked out a place close to the old stone wall where there was an opening big enough for him to squeeze into in case any one of whom he was afraid should come along and sat down to watch Johnny Chuck's doorway.

Now Jimmy Skunk had guessed just what Peter would do, and so he had told Sammy Jay that Peter was going to watch for Johnny Chuck to come out and look for his shadow. Sammy had laughed till he lost his breath and had hurried away to tell everybody he could find. So while Peter sat there and watched, friends of his were watching too, only they were watching him instead of Johnny Chuck's doorway, and they would wink at each other and chuckle. At first Peter didn't mind sitting still, but after a while he began to grow sleepy, for you know he had been up all night. He did wish that Johnny Chuck would hurry up and come out. It seemed to him that never had it taken jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun so long to climb up in the blue, blue sky. He grew so sleepy that he would nod. Then he would open his eyes in a hurry, fearing that he might really have slept a few minutes and that Johnny Chuck might have come out and gone back again.

Never was there a longer day. Jolly Mr. Sun climbed up until he was right overhead and then began to go down toward the Purple Hills. Still there was no sign of Johnny Chuck. All day long Peter's friends made some excuse to come past that way just to see him, and then went away laughing. It was such a good joke! At last the

Black Shadows began to creep out. There had been no sign of Johnny Chuck, and now if he should come out he couldn't possibly see his shadow. Peter decided that it was time to go home. He was stiff from sitting so long, and he was disappointed, dreadfully disappointed.

As he hopped over the stone wall on his way to the dear Old Brier Patch along came Jimmy Skunk.

"What luck?" asked Jimmy. There was something in Jimmy's voice that made Peter suspect that Jimmy was trying hard not to laugh.

"Jimmy Skunk," said he severely, "do you believe that story about Johnny Chuck and his shadow?"

"No," replied Jimmy. "The first time I heard it I went straight into Johnny's house and found him just as sound asleep as anyone could be."

"And you knew all the time that I was sitting there watching for nothing?" demanded Peter.

"Not for nothing, Peter. Not for nothing," replied Jimmy, and grinned right in Peter's face. "I guess you've learned how silly it is to believe everything you hear, and that is something gained."

STORY 1556. February 5, 1917

Peter Tries to Visit Paddy the Beaver

Peter Rabbit was teased so much by his friends because of the way he had watched all day for Johnny Chuck to come out to look for his shadow that he began to wish that he might find a place where he could be by himself until his friends had forgotten about the joke, and this reminded him that he had not visited the lonely pond of Paddy the Beaver deep in the Green Forest for a very long time. In fact he had not been over there since the coming of Winter.

"I believe I'll run over and visit Paddy and see how he is getting along," thought Peter. He wouldn't admit even to himself that he was running away from the teasing of his friends, but that is just what he was doing as he hopped along, lipperty-lipperty-lip, through the Green Forest towards the pond of Paddy the Beaver. You see he knew that it wasn't in the least likely that he would find anyone else there at this time of year, and he felt quite sure that Paddy couldn't have heard of the joke about Johnny Chuck's shadow. He could have a nice visit with Paddy in peace.

Now, even in Summer the pond of Paddy the Beaver is a very lonesome sort of place to anyone who likes company, but in Winter it is still more lonesome. When Peter got there, he couldn't hear a sound or see a sign that any living creature was about. The pond was frozen over. He had expected that. He was rather glad of it. It gave him a chance to go right out to Paddy's house, and he had wanted to see that house close to for a long, long time. You know Peter always had regarded it as a very wonderful house, as indeed it is. When Peter peeped out from the bushes on the edge of the pond,

Illustrations. January 29 to February 3, 1917.

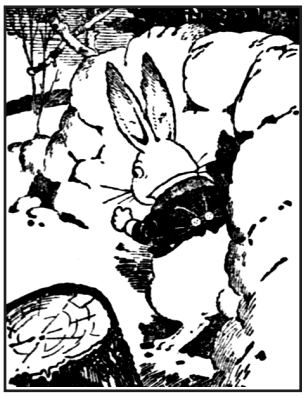
1550. Old Man Coyote Waits in Vain
He sniffed again and then once more very, very carefully.

1551. Farmer Brown's Boy Forgets
Dandycock had stepped in that trap.

1552. Peter Rabbit Rubs His Eyes
Then Peter started off as fast as he could go, lipperty, lipperty, lip.

1553. Jimmy Skunk Relieves Peter Rabbit
Jimmy Skunk grinned more broadly than ever. "Why this dreadful hurry, Peter?"

1554. Peter Rabbit Gains Wealth
"Who ever heard of butterflies in the middle of winter?" repeated Peter Rabbit.



1555. Peter Rabbit Watches and is Watched
He did wish that Johnny Chuck would hurry up and come out.

he saw just a smooth white sheet that made him think of the Green Meadows when they are covered with snow. There was nothing even to hint at a pond, for you see it was frozen from shore to shore, and the ice was covered with snow. Near one end was a great white mound. This was Paddy's house.

Peter gazed over at it with eyes very wide with curiosity. How different it was from what it had been the last time he saw it! Then it was a great mound of sticks covered with rushes and mud, very wonderful, but not at all pretty. Now it was pure white and beautiful and more wonderful than ever.

"I'll go right over and have a nice visit with Paddy," said he. "He must be lonesome and he'll probably be glad to see me. I certainly will be glad to see him."

So Peter scampered across the pond, lipperty-lipperty-lip, straight to the house of Paddy the Beaver. Now Peter is heedless as we all know. It wasn't until he reached that glistening white house of Paddy's and had been around it three times looking for a doorway that he remembered that he never had seen a doorway; that he never had seen Paddy enter or leave that wonderful house for the very good reason that the only doorway was down at the bottom of the pond, and so, of course, was always covered with water. Now it must be down somewhere under the ice.

Peter sat up and stared at the house. He felt foolish. He did. Yes, sir, he felt foolish, even more foolish than he had when he had discovered that he had watched Johnny Chuck's house all day for nothing. Here he had come all the way over to visit Paddy the Beaver and he couldn't do it, although he felt sure that Paddy wasn't three feet from him at that very minute. Do you wonder that he felt foolish?

"I'm glad I didn't tell anyone what I meant to do," muttered Peter. "If I had they would have laughed at me and teased me more than ever. Anyway, now that I'm here I'm going to find out all I can. I wonder if I can get up on top of this house."

STORY 1557. February 6, 1917

Peter Rabbit Investigates

In-vest-i-gate is a big word with a very simple meaning. It means to try to find out about a thing, that is all. Peter Rabbit was in-vest-i-gating the house of Paddy the Beaver. That is, he was in-vest-i-gating the outside of it. He was trying to find out if there was any way into it or any way to let Paddy the Beaver know that he was trying to make him a visit. He had come all the way from the dear Old Brier Patch on the Green Meadows to Paddy's lonesome pond deep in the Green Forest, and never once had thought that probably he wouldn't be able to see Paddy at all. He had forgotten that of course Paddy wouldn't be swimming around in his pond for the very good reason that the pond was covered with ice. It hadn't entered his head until he caught the first glimpse of the ice-covered pond and Paddy's snow-covered house. Then how silly and foolish he had felt!

But now that he was here Peter meant to make the most of his chance to see Paddy's house—the outside of it, anyway—close to. If Paddy was in that house there

was only the thickness of the wall between them, and it did seem funny to be so near him and yet not be able to visit with him.

"Perhaps there is a doorway on top somewhere," thought he hopefully, and hopped around looking for a place to climb up. But for a while he was almost willing to give it up. There didn't seem to be any way to get on top of Paddy's house. You see the last thing before the coming of Jack Frost Paddy had plastered his roof with mud, and this Jack Frost had frozen until it was as hard as stone. Paddy had known that he would do this, and that is why he had waited until he was sure of the coming of Jack Frost before putting the mud on. You see Paddy knew that he had got to spend the Winter in that house, and he wanted to feel perfectly sure that no one could break into it if once they reached it. When once that wet mud had been put on and Jack Frost had done his part not even the great claws of Buster Bear could tear it open.

After a while Peter noticed that on one side the snow had heaped up against Paddy's house. Perhaps if he climbed up on that and then jumped with all his might, he might be able to scramble up to the top of the roof. No sooner did he think of it than he tried it. There was no trouble in getting up on the little snowbank. Then Peter drew a long breath and jumped with all his might. He landed halfway up the roof and then tried to scramble up the rest of the way. But the snow was crusted and slippery, and he slid back in spite of all he could do.

When he had got his breath back, he tried again. Then he tried again, and still again. At last, he managed to stick where he landed. You see he had jumped on that particular spot so many times that he had broken the crust. Peter rested a bit and then he went to work. He dug the snow out from under that crust and then found that it broke easily. So at last he reached the very top of Paddy's house. He rested for a few minutes, and while he rested he looked about for a possible way of getting into Paddy's house. But there wasn't any. Of course not. Peter hadn't really expected there would be. He had just hoped, that was all.

If Peter wanted to find a place where he could be quite by himself, a lonesome place, he certainly had found it. Sitting up there on top of Paddy's house he could see all over Paddy's pond. It was smooth and white and there wasn't the least sign of any living creature. All around it stood the tall trees of the Green Forest, and because there happened to be no wind there was not even a sigh from the pine trees. The Laughing Brook was locked in ice and so its voice was stilled. It was so lonesome there that the lonesomeness could be felt. Peter wanted to talk to somebody. He wanted to talk to Paddy the Beaver, but he couldn't. It gave Peter a funny feeling to be sitting on some one's house and, yet unable to know for sure whether or not they were inside.

STORY 1558. February 7, 1917

Peter Finds That Paddy is at Home

What eyes can't see and ears can't hear
A nose may sometimes tell.

Who heeds his nose quite often can
Gain knowledge from a smell.

You know this is true. Many times, I guess, your nose has told you the minute you entered your house just what you were going to have for dinner. I know mine has. With the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest noses are very, very important indeed, and in some cases are depended on even more than eyes or ears. You know it is mostly by means of their noses that Reddy and Granny Fox and Old Man Coyote find their dinners. Their noses tell them not only when someone has been along but who it was and how long ago they passed.

Peter Rabbit's wobbly little nose isn't as good as the nose of Reddy Fox or Old Man Coyote because he doesn't have to trust to it as much as they do to theirs, but still he gains a great deal of knowledge by means of it. He depends on it very largely to pick out the good-to-eat plants from the not-good-to-eat plants. And as Peter has a very large stomach and a very large appetite to go with it he makes very good use of that wobbly little nose most of the time.

But as he sat on the top of the snow-covered house of Paddy the Beaver he wasn't thinking of food at all. He was thinking about Paddy the Beaver and wondering if Paddy could really be right down underneath him, so near and yet as impossible to see or speak to as if he were far away like Welcome Robin and the other birds who had gone to the sunny southland. All the time his wobbly little nose kept wobbling. It must have been from force of habit, for Peter certainly had no idea of smelling anything there.

By and by as he squatted there, growing more and more lonesome every minute, for there is no more lonesome place in all the Green Forest than the pond of Paddy the Beaver when it is bound in ice, it gradually crept into Peter's funny little head that his wobbly little nose was trying to tell him something. A queer musky smell was tickling that wobbly little nose. Peter took a long sniff and then another. Then he sat up very straight and looked all around this way and that way suspiciously. But look as he would, he could see no one and nothing to account for that smell.

Once more he squatted as before and right away that queer smell tickled his nose again. Again Peter sat up and looked with all his might and listened with all his might, but saw nothing and heard nothing to account for that queer smell. When he was tired of looking and listening he squatted again. Now, when Peter squats his nose is brought very, very close to whatever he happens to be sitting on. This time, of course, it was the roof of the house of Paddy the Beaver.

Suddenly he realized that that queer smell came from right under him. He looked down at his feet sharply. Just in front of his toes and right under his nose were two or three small holes where the snow had melted. Peter stared at them and then just out of curiosity he sniffed at them. It was out of those little holes that that queer smell came!

All in a flash Peter understood what it meant. "Paddy is at home!" he cried and, forgetting where he was, he jumped up and kicked his heels together joyfully. But when he came down his feet flew out from under him and down that sloping roof he shot,

kicking and sprawling, to land on the ice below with a thump that quite knocked the breath from him.

"Anyway, I've found out what I wanted to know," he muttered as he felt of himself carefully to make sure that he was quite whole.

STORY 1559. February 8, 1917

Peter Has to Give Up

Peter Rabbit hates to give up. At least he hates to give up when once his curiosity is aroused. I guess, perhaps, you know how that is. There is nothing like curiosity to keep one at a thing. When Peter had made sure that there was nothing more the matter with him than a few bumps after his tumble from the roof of Paddy the Beaver's house, he sat still for a few minutes trying to decide what to do next.

"Now that I know that Paddy is at home I want to talk with him. That's what I came over here for. It seems a funny thing to be as near Paddy as I am this very blessed minute and still not be able to say hello. I wonder how those little holes happen to be in the top of his house. I wonder—" Peter stopped and stared very hard up at the place he had tumbled from. "I wonder," he finished at last, "if I can talk to him through those holes."

This was an idea worth trying. Peter promptly hurried around and scrambled up on Paddy's roof as he had before. He studied those little holes out of which came the queer smell that had told him that Paddy himself was just below. At last, a pleased look crossed his face.

"I know now!" he exclaimed. "Those are air holes. It is through them that Paddy gets fresh air. Of course. How stupid of me not to think of it before.

"The warm air from Paddy's bedroom has melted the snow. I remember now that Jerry Muskrat told me that Paddy had left some tiny holes in the top of his roof for fresh air. Of course he couldn't live without that. I wonder if I can make him hear me."

Peter put his mouth close to one of the little holes. "Hello, down there!" he called.

Then he put one ear down to the little hole and waited. But there was no reply and so, after a little, Peter tried again. "Hello! Hello! Hello! Are you asleep down there, Paddy?"

Still, there was no reply. Now Peter hasn't much of a voice and he knows it. For once he wished he had a voice like Howler the Wolf or Old Man Coyote. But he hadn't, so there was nothing to do but to make the best of what voice he had got.

"It's me, Peter Rabbit, and I've come over to visit you!" he cried, and once more listened. It was all in vain. There wasn't a sound from inside that house. If it hadn't been for that smell Peter wouldn't have believed that there could be anybody down inside.

"He must be asleep." thought Peter. "Perhaps I can wake him up by thumping. I

did that once to Jerry Muskrat[6]. I'll try it anyway."

So Peter thumped on top of Paddy's roof as only Peter can thump. Between thumps he would call down one of the little holes. But for all his thumping and all his calling he got no reply. There wasn't a sound, not a single sound to show that anyone was at home down there. Peter tried one more thump and this time he thumped as hard as he knew how. He thumped so hard that he lost his balance and down that steep roof he shot as he had once before and landed sprawling on the ice below.

"Ugh!" grunted Peter and it seemed to him that the sky was suddenly filled with little fiery stars, which, of course, it wasn't, for it was broad daylight. Peter had bumped his head, that was all. He got to his feet a little stiffly and rubbed his head. "It's of no use," thought he. "I've got to give up. I hate to, but I've got to. What a funny way to live anyway. Of course Paddy is safe enough. Nobody can get at him. But neither can he get out. He is a prisoner in his own house. I wouldn't like that. No, sir, I wouldn't like that. My, but this is a lonesome place! I guess I'll go home."

Peter took one more look at Paddy's house—prison Peter called it now—and then started back for the dear old Brier Patch, but not as fast as he had come. You see he was rather stiff and sore from the bumps he had got.

STORY 1560. February 9, 1917

A Willing Prisoner

As Peter Rabbit hopped along slowly through the Green Forest on his way home to the dear Old Briar Patch after his unsuccessful effort to visit with Paddy the Beaver his thoughts were all of Paddy and the queer life he led. At least it seemed a queer life to Peter, a very, very queer life.

"He's nothing but a prisoner: a prisoner in his own home," Peter kept saying over and over to himself. "I wouldn't like that. No siree, I wouldn't like that! The very idea of not being able to say hello to your neighbors when they come to see you! It can't be that he sleeps all the time because he stored up a great pile of food in the Fall. He must get dreadfully lonesome. I think I would rather sleep as Johnny Chuck I does if I had got to be a prisoner the way Paddy is. I do so. My, I'm glad, I'm not either one of them, even if I do have to scramble for a living sometimes."

It is quite true as Peter said that Paddy the Beaver is in a way a prisoner at this time of year, but if Peter could have seen Paddy at the very time he was pitying him he might have I changed his mind. In fact, I am not sure that he wouldn't have been just a wee bit envious and not quite so well contented with his own lot in life. So perhaps it is just as well that Peter didn't and couldn't see Paddy. And it certainly is just as well that Peter couldn't know that at that very time Paddy was pitying Peter. Yes, sir, he was actually pitying Peter.

You see all the time Peter had been up on top of Paddy's roof Paddy had been curled up in his bed in the coziest of bedrooms just below Peter. When Peter had called

6 STORY 285. 1913.

down through the little air-holes that let the used air out of Paddy's house and the fresh air in, Paddy had not heard him. You see Peter hasn't much of a voice anyway, and those holes were very small and the roof was thick. But when Peter thumped, Paddy did hear him. He was half asleep at the time, but at the thump, thump, thump overhead he lifted his head and listened.

"There is somebody on my roof," said he. "I wonder who it is. I wonder if it can be Old Man Coyote trying to get in. I hope it is." Paddy chuckled down in his throat. "I'd like him to find out just how strong a house I've got. He couldn't get in if he spent the rest of his life trying to."

Paddy yawned lazily. There was another thump and then all was still. That was when Peter finally slipped down the roof and gave it up. "Somehow those thumps remind me of Peter Rabbit," continued Paddy, talking to himself because there was no one else to talk to and he liked to hear his own voice. "I wonder how Peter is getting on this Winter. Poor Peter. It must be pretty tough during some of the time when rough Brother North Wind is howling and driving the snow before him. It is a pity Peter hasn't sense enough to build a home like this and to lay up a supply of food to last all Winter the way I do.

"I haven't a thing in the world to worry me, not a thing. I don't suppose there is any one in the wide world any more comfortable in Winter than I am. It is a lazy life I lead, but I worked hard enough in the Fail, so I guess I earned a rest. I surely am sorry for those who have to hustle for a living these days. A lot of them laughed at me for working so hard to build this house and lay up my big store of food but it is my turn to laugh now. There is nothing like being prepared, nothing like it, nothing like it. I don't envy anybody, not a living soul."

Paddy yawned, then turned over for another nap. Don't you think that if Peter could have heard him and seen him, he would have thought him a very willing prisoner?

STORY 1561. February 10, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Visits Paddy's Pond

There were others besides Peter Rabbit who thought of Paddy the Beaver and wondered about him and how he was getting along through the Winter. One of these was Farmer Brown's boy. He knew, of course, that Paddy's pond was frozen over and that now he could walk right up to Paddy's house and look at it to his heart's content. So the very day after Peter tried to visit Paddy what did Farmer Brown's boy do but decide that he, too, would pay Paddy a visit. At least he would visit the pond and the dam and the house. He didn't really expect to visit Paddy himself because he knew that Paddy probably would be where he couldn't be seen.

So Farmer Brown's boy fastened a small axe to his belt, to his belt, whistled to Bowser the Hound and together they started off through the Green Forest for the pond of Paddy the Beaver. Passing through the Old Orchard they were greeted by the cheery

voice of Tommy Tit the Chickadee and Farmer Brown's boy stopped to whistle to him as he always does. He saw Yank Yank the Nuthatch and Drummer the Woodpecker and on the old stone wall he caught a glimpse of Chatterer the Red Squirrel. But after he entered the Green Forest he didn't see a living thing save the trees and Bowser.

"It's so still I can almost hear myself think and if you were not with me, I would have to talk to myself to keep from being lonesome. I don't believe there is another living soul in the Green Forest today, Bowser, old fellow," said Farmer Brown's boy.

Bowser looked up and wagged his tail just as if he understood, and then trotted on ahead, sniffing and sniffing at every bush, as much as to say, "I'm not so sure about that. Your eyes and your ears may not tell you if anybody is about, but just you trust to my nose. I really expect it to find somebody before we get back."

Now, as a matter of fact, they were not so much alone as Farmer Brown's Boy thought. Sammy Jay had seen them enter the Green Forest, and in that sly, silent way of his he was following them, taking great care that they should not see him. He wanted to know where they were going and what they were up to. As they passed a little hemlock tree, whose branches were very close to the ground, Jumper the Hare peeped out at them and didn't move, although Farmer Brown's boy looked straight at him and mistook him for a little heap of snow, for Jumper was wearing his coat of pure white.

Bowser would have discovered him right away had he happened to sniff under that particular little tree, but he didn't, and so Jumper sat perfectly still and when they had passed he chuckled to himself.

There's nothing quite like sitting tight
For one who would keep out of sight,"

said he to himself.

Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound reached the pond of Paddy the Beaver without Bowser having seen anybody and without Bowser having smelled anybody. They went right straight across the ice to Paddy's house. Bowser just sniffed around it and then went over to the shore. He wasn't interested in houses. But Farmer Brown's boy spent a great deal of time studying that house and the way in which it was built, and the more he studied it the greater grew his respect and admiration for Paddy the Beaver.

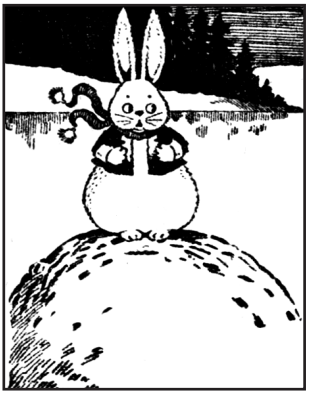
"I suppose the little rascal is in there now," thought Farmer Brown's boy. "I wish I could see the inside of it. I'd like to chop it open, but that wouldn't do at all. It would be a mean and cruel thing to do. I wonder what he does—if he sleeps most of the time or if he is awake enough to know what is going on. I wonder if there should be a hole in his dam and the water should run out how long it would be before he would find it out and what he would do about it. I've half a mind to find out."

Farmer Brown's boy walked over to Paddy's dam and stood looking down at it, thoughtfully.

STORY 1562. February 12, 1917

Illustrations. February 5 to February 10, 1917.

1556. Peter Tries to Visit Paddy the Beaver
"I'm glad I didn't tell anyone what I meant to do," muttered Peter.



1557. Peter Rabbit Investigates
So at least he reached the top of Paddy's house.

1558. Peter Finds That Paddy is at Home
But when he came down his feet flew out from under him and down that sloping roof he shot.

1559. Peter Has to Give Up
"Ugh!" grunted Peter, and it seemed to him that the sky was suddenly filled with little fiery stars.

1560. A Willing Prisoner
"There is somebody on my roof," said he.

1561. Farmer Brown's Boy Visits Paddy's Pond
"I suppose the little rascal is in there now," thought Farmer Brown's Boy.

He Makes a Hole in Paddy's Dam

Farmer Brown's boy stood on the dam of Paddy the Beaver looking down at it thoughtfully. In one hand was the little ax which he had brought along with him because it often is very handy in the woods. Right below him was the ice-bound Laughing Brook. He could hear the water gurgling faintly under the ice. "It seems like a mean thing to do, and yet it won't do Paddy any real harm and I do want to find out just how smart Paddy is," said he, talking to himself. "Of course, I wouldn't think of making a hole big enough to let all the water out of Paddy's pond, but only just big enough to make him think that something has happened."

He climbed down to the Laughing Brook and then began to chop at Paddy's dam. Chop, chop, chop, went the ax. At first it didn't accomplish much, but after a while there began to be the beginning of a hole. It was more of a job than Farmer Brown's boy had thought it would be, but he is one of those who, when they start a thing, keeps at it until it is finished. As he worked his respect for Paddy grew. It was a much stouter and better dam than he had had any idea it was.

Sammy Jay, who had silently followed him to Paddy's pond, watched him work and Sammy was sorely puzzled. Two or three times he opened his mouth to scream a warning and then closed it again. In the first place he wanted to see what Farmer Brown's boy really was up to, and in the second place he knew that his screaming would do no good. And Sammy wasn't the only one watching Farmer Brown's boy. Old Man Coyote had taken it into his head to visit Paddy's pond that day and he had discovered Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound without being himself discovered. So, while Bowser was sniffing and snuffing about on one side of Paddy's pond, Old Man Coyote was sitting in a safe hiding place on the other side of the pond and watching all that was going on.

"I don't know what he is doing that for," thought Old Man Coyote, "unless he is going to set a trap there so that when Paddy comes to fix his dam he will step into the trap and be caught. If that is what he is up to I can tell him right now that he'll never get that Beaver's skin. If Paddy gets caught in a trap Old Man Coyote will be right on hand for a dinner." He grinned as only he can grin.

Meanwhile Farmer Brown's boy chopped and chopped and chopped, not once suspecting that he was being watched, and all the time with an uncomfortable feeling in his heart that he was doing a mean thing, even if he didn't intend any harm. By and by the water began to trickle through where he was chopping. He kept on until there was a good-sized stream running and he knew that it would keep running until the water in the pond under the ice was as low as the hole in the dam. Then he stopped chopping.

Old Man Coyote watched to see him set a trap. But he did nothing of the kind. Instead, he went off a little way and sat down on an old log, where he could watch that hole in the dam. Then he called Bowser and made him lie down at his feet and kept still. Old Man Coyote wrinkled his brows in a puzzled way and the hope of that Beaver dinner began to fade away.

"Now what can he be going to do?" muttered Old Man Coyote.

But Farmer Brown's boy did nothing but sit there and stare at the little stream of water running from that hole he had cut in Paddy's dam. Sammy Jay and Old Man Coyote sat just as still staring at Farmer Brown's boy and it was very, very still there in the Green Forest.

STORY 1563. February 13, 1917

Paddy the Beaver Grows Anxious

Paddy the Beaver lay on his comfortable dry bed of fine splinters of wood in his house and wondered who it was outside. There was some one there he knew, because he heard little sounds as of someone thumping on his roof. But this didn't trouble him a bit. No, sir; not a bit. You see that roof was so stout and strong that he didn't fear anybody. There was no one he knew of who possibly could break through it except Farmer Brown's boy, and it was so long since Paddy had seen him that he had quite forgotten all about him.

So he lay there in the dark, for, there being no windows in his house, his bedroom was perfectly dark even in the middle of the brightest day, and wondered who could be outside, and if they were not envying him his comfortable home. After a while the sounds ceased and inside Paddy's house it was still, the stillest place you can think of. Paddy had just rolled over to take a nap when suddenly he heard another sound that made him sit up quickly and listen with all his might. It was a far-away sound, but Paddy knew that it came from the direction of his dam. He knew that it reached him by traveling through the water under the ice of his pond, and though he didn't know what made it he didn't like it at all. Somehow it made him nervous. It gave him an unpleasant feeling that something was going on which ought not to be.

Of course you know what it was that Paddy heard. It was the chop, chop, chop of the ax in the hands of Farmer Brown's boy as he cut a hole in Paddy's dam. But Paddy didn't know that. However, he did know it was a sound such as he never had heard before and that made him suspicious and worried right away. He slipped down one of his hallways into the water and swam out under the ice. There he heard the sound very much plainer and he knew for sure that it came from the direction of his dam.

"What is it? What can it be?" thought Paddy, and swam about uneasily. Presently he had to go back to his house for air. Two or three times he swam out under the ice, but everything seemed just as usual.

Once, while he was out, Paddy swam over to his food-pile, which you know is made up of short aspen logs which he sank in the pond near his house in the Fall. Everything was all right there and Paddy took a little stick back with him and dragged it up into his house, where he could gnaw off the bark in comfort, for you know it is aspen bark on which he lives in Winter.

Somehow he didn't enjoy that bark as much as usual. That chopping sound had stopped and all was still, just as still as usual, but somehow Paddy couldn't get over that worried feeling. "I feel it in my bones that something is wrong," muttered

Paddy as he stripped the bark from the stick. “I don’t know why, but I do. It’s a very uncomfortable feeling. I think when I am through, I will go down to my dam and see if it is all right.”

Paddy stripped every bit of bark from the stick he had brought from the foodpile, for food is precious in Winter, and he could not afford to waste any. When the stick was quite bare, he dragged it down his hall into the water and swam out with it. Right away Paddy knew that something was wrong. There was more of a space between the water and the ice than there had been. That meant that the water was running out of his pond. There must be a leak in his dam. Paddy turned and swam straight for the dam. He was worried, very much worried. It would never, never do to have the water run out of his pond.

STORY 1564. February 14, 1917

Farmer Brown’s Boy is Satisfied

For all his hurry and his worry as he went to find out what might be the matter with his dam, Paddy the Beaver didn’t forget to carry along with him that stick from which he had just eaten the bark. No, sir, he didn’t forget to carry that stick along. He couldn’t swim quite so fast as he could have without it, but he knew that in the end he would save time by taking it along. You see, Paddy knew that if there was a hole in his dam, and he was pretty sure there was, he would need that stick in filling up that hole.

It didn’t take Paddy long to find that hole. In fact, he swam right straight to it as if he had known all along just where it was. Of course the water running out made a little current and all Paddy had to do was to follow this. The first thing he did when he reached the dam was to examine that hole very carefully. It wasn’t a very big hole, and as soon as Paddy saw this a great load was lifted from his mind. How it had come there he hadn’t the least idea, but there would be time enough to think about that later.

So Paddy took the stick he had brought along and wedged it into that hole. Then he brought other sticks of which he had a supply right there at the dam for just that purpose. You see he is such a careful, thrifty fellow that whenever he had eaten the bark from a stick in his woodpile, he had taken that stick over to the dam to have it ready to use should there be need, as there now was. The dam is a very important affair to Paddy, for on the strength of that depends his comfort and safety. As fast as he could be filled that hole with sticks. When he couldn’t get any more in he brought mud from the bot tom of the pond and pushed it in between the sticks. In less time than you would think there was only a little trickle of water running through where that hole had been, and Paddy sighed with relief. He was safe now.

But he kept right on working until that hole was filled. Then he went all along the whole length of his dam to make sure that there were no other holes. All the time he was of course under the ice. As there was a little space between the water and the ice above he could get what air he needed by sticking his nose above the water. When he was quite sure that his dam was once more strong and safe he swam back to his house and crawled up into his bedroom to rest and to wonder who could have made that hole

and to hope that whoever it was they would not make another.

All this time Farmer Brown's boy, who you know had cut that hole in the dam just out of curiosity to find out how long it would take Paddy to discover it and what he would do when he did dis cover it, sat where he could see that hole and kept his eyes right on it. He hadn't sat there long enough to grow impatient when it seemed to him at the stream of water running out of that hole was smaller. He leaned forward and watched eagerly. Yes, that stream certainly was smaller, and even as he looked it grew smaller still. The eyes of Farmer Brown's boy shone with interest and admiration.

"I do believe that little rascal has found that hole and is filling it up already!" he exclaimed under his breath. "How I wish I could see him at work! Bowser, old fellow, if there is any smarter animal in the world than Paddy the Beaver, I don't know who it is."

Bowser the Hound looked up at his master and thumped his tail on the snow as much as to say that he agreed though of course he didn't know what his master was talking about at all. The little stream grew smaller and smaller and smaller, and finally there was no stream at all. Farmer Brown's boy waited a long time. Then he walked softly over to the dam and looked at the place where he had cut the hole. There was no longer a hole there. It had been filled and a very fine job it was.

"I take off my hat to you, Paddy" said he, and did it. "I've learned a lot and I'm satisfied. I may have worried you a little, but I did you no harm and now I'll leave you alone. I'll never worry you again."

With this he started for home whistling, and Bowser the Hound ran ahead sniffing and snuffing for tracks of someone to chase.

STORY 1565. February 15, 1917

Reddy Fox Finds a Strange Track

Reddy Fox was in the Old Pasture. Every so often Reddy visits the Old Pasture with the very lively hope that he will be able to surprise Old Jed Thumper, the big gray rabbit who is, you remember, the father, of little Mrs. Peter Rabbit, and who has lived in a bull-brier castle in the Old Pasture ever since Reddy can remember[7]. Once or twice Reddy has surprised Old Jed Thumper, but never quite far enough away from his bull-brier castle to catch him before he could reach it.

When Reddy was a little fellow getting his first lessons in the art of hunting, Old Granny Fox had taken him to the Old Pasture day after day just to hunt Old Jed Thumper. You see Granny knew that Old Jed was extremely wise in all that a Rabbit should know and quite as wise in the ways of a Fox. She didn't have the least idea that Reddy would be able to catch Old Jed Thumper, for with all her shrewdness and cunning she herself had never been able to catch him, but she knew that in trying to catch such a clever old fellow Reddy would learn more quickly than in any other way the tricks and ways of a smart rabbit, and this knowledge would be of use to him in

7 STORY 450. 1913.

hunting other rabbits.

When Reddy had grown big enough and old enough to go hunting alone, he often visited the Old Pasture just to try out his wits and skill against the shrewdness of Old Jed Thumper. After while it had become a kind of game which Reddy enjoyed and which I dare say Old Jed enjoyed, too. Right down in his heart Reddy hoped to win that game someday. It was not so much that he wanted Old Jed Thumper for a dinner as it was that he wanted to lay Old Jed at the feet of Granny Fox and thus prove to her that he had been smart enough to do what Granny had never been able to do. But so far Reddy had never been able to so much as pull a hair from Old Jed Thumper's provoking white tail.

On this particular day, for all his care and craft and cunning Reddy had had no better luck than usual, which luck was to see that provoking white tall bob into the safety of the bull-brier castle just one good jump ahead of him. Reddy had become so used to this that he was not really disappointed. It was no more than he had expected. So he grinned in through the bull briers at Old Jed Thumper and told him that the next time he would catch him, just as he had done dozens of times before, and Old Jed Thumper grinned back, just as he had done dozens of times before, and said:

"Nice weather, isn't It, Reddy? I'm glad you called. Come again."

Then Reddy had trotted away to another part of the Old Pasture, He hadn't much of anything on his mind at the time and was trotting along easily, ears, eyes, and nose all busy as they should be, when he came to a track in the snow. A mere glance showed him that it was a fox track.

"Hello!" exclaimed Reddy, "I thought that Granny Fox was over in the Green Forest. It must be she changed her mind and has come up here, I believe I'll follow these tracks and see what she is up to."

So Reddy turned and began to follow the tracks in the snow. He had gone only a few steps when it struck him that those tracks seemed odd. He stopped to look at them closely. They were—yes, they were smaller and daintier than the tracks of Old Granny Fox. Reddy bent his head and sniffed at the tracks. The hair on the back of his neck and shoulders lifted ever so little, a way it has of doing when Reddy begins to grow angry. Then he lifted his head and stared suspiciously this way and that way.

"There has been a strange fox here in the Old Pasture," growled Reddy deep in his throat. The Old Pasture is the hunting ground of Granny and me, and no other fox has any business here. I must look into this. I certainly must look into this. If I catch that fox I'll—"

But Reddy didn't say what he would do; he merely looked it. He bared his teeth, his long sharp teeth, in a most ugly way and snarled a most ugly little snarl. Then he started on swiftly, following those strange tracks.

STORY 1566. February 16, 1917

Reddy Fox Has a Funny Feeling

Swiftly Reddy Fox followed the strange tracks he had found in the Old Pasture, and his face was not at all pleasant to see. His lips were lifted enough to show his teeth, and in his eyes was an angry look that seemed to promise something very unpleasant for someone. That someone Reddy intended to be the strange fox who had dared to come hunting in the Old Pasture. You see Reddy regarded the Old Pasture and the Green Meadows and the Green Forest as belonging to Old Granny Fox and himself. That is, he felt that no other fox had any right to hunt there.

"That fox has got smaller feet than I have, and so must be smaller than I am. I guess I'll teach him a lesson when I catch up with him," he muttered angrily. Right that very minute a funny thought popped into Reddy's head. Supposing he was mistaken, and that instead of "him" he should have said "her." He stopped to sniff at the tracks, and somehow, he didn't know just why, he became quite sure that he HAD been mistaken, and that he should have said "her" instead of "him."

"It don't make any difference, anyway," he snapped. "I'll teach her that she has no business here. It is hard enough getting enough to eat as it is." So Reddy trotted on swiftly, talking to himself, saying unpleasant things, you know. The tracks became fresher, and when he sniffed at them the scent in them grew stronger with every sniff. This meant that the one who made them could not be very far ahead, and he would soon catch up. And then Reddy became aware that a funny feeling was creeping over him. The fresher those tracks and the stronger the scent in them the funnier grew that feeling. All his anger was slipping away. Yes, sir, his anger was slipping away. He still made dreadful threats of what he would do to that stranger, but right in his own heart he knew that he didn't really mean one of them. He knew he was just trying to fool himself by them. He was more anxious than ever to find that stranger. He was even hoping that by no chance had the stranger left the Old Pasture. Such dainty footprints! He was quite sure that never had he seen any to be compared with them.

Suddenly Reddy had a feeling that someone was watching him. Perhaps you have had that feeling yourself some time. It made him stop and stare very hard at a clump of bushes just ahead. Did something move there? With a sharp little "Yap!" Reddy sprang forward, and as he did so a slim red form bounded out from the bushes and away. It was the stranger! At the sight of the stranger the funny feeling which had been stealing over Reddy grew still more funny. It took away every bit of anger and in its place left a great desire to make friends with this stranger, for she was very beautiful. Reddy was quite sure that she was the most beautiful fox he ever had seen, the most beautiful fox that ever lived.

Now instead of wanting to drive her away he was afraid, terribly afraid that she would go away, and he would never see her again. He wanted her to stay.

"Wait! Please don't go!" he called and ran after her.

But she was very timid, was this stranger, and very swift of foot. Though Reddy ran his fastest he got no more than a glimpse of her red cloak now and then as she twisted this way and turned that way among the bushes. But though she ran away from him she didn't leave the Old Pasture.

At last Reddy had to stop to rest. He sat down with his tongue hanging from his mouth, for he was quite out of breath and tired. He was disappointed and discouraged. He had done his best, his very best, but in spite of this he had I not been able to get any nearer the beautiful stranger, and it seemed to him now that this was the one thing he wanted most in all the world. Presently he had that funny feeling again, that feeling of being watched. He turned his head quickly. There, peering around the edge of a big rock, was the face of the stranger! She had stolen back and was watching him timidly. Reddy had a funnier feeling than ever. You will never guess what that feeling was. It was a feeling of bashfulness. Yes, sir, for the first time in his life Reddy Fox felt bashful.

STORY 1567. February 17, 1917

The Timid Stranger

It was something new for Reddy Fox to feel bashful. Never in his life had he felt that way before. But now as he saw that beautiful stranger peeping at him from around the edge of a big rock Reddy did feel bashful, very bashful Indeed. When he had first found the stranger's tracks in the Old Pasture he had started to follow them with anger in his heart. Yes, sir, he had anger in his heart. He meant to drive that stranger away from the Old Pasture. Now all that anger had melted away, and in its place was a great longing to become acquainted with that stranger, and at the same time such a queer feeling of shyness. Just imagine Reddy Fox feeling shy!

When the beautiful stranger knew that Reddy saw her peeping around the rock she dodged back out of sight. Slowly, bashfully, Reddy walked over to where she had been. He hoped to find her just around behind the rock. But when he peeped around, she wasn't there. She had run away. Once more Reddy felt a great fear that she would leave the Old Pasture and that he never I would see her again. At once he began to follow her tracks, running swiftly that he might overtake her before she should leave the Old Pasture. He felt that if she should do this and he should never see her again he would be unhappy all the rest of his life.

But the beautiful stranger was very, very timid, and she was very, very swift of foot. Though he ran his best Reddy found that he could no more than catch an occasional glimpse of her red cloak. In vain he called to her that he wouldn't hurt her but merely wanted to become acquainted with her. As long as he chased her, she ran. But when he stopped to rest, he noticed that she also stopped, and if he sat still very long would come creeping back to peep at him shyly from behind a bush or a tree or a rock. Little by little it crept into Reddy's head that she was simply very, very timid and very, very shy; that when he chased her, he merely frightened her; and that it might be that she would like to make friends with him quite as much as he would with her.

At this thought Reddy began to feel a wee bit important. At least he began to want to look important. He shook out his red coat and big brush of a tail and held himself as proudly as he knew how. He tried to make himself appear very big and strong and handsome. He strutted. Yes, sir, Reddy strutted. He strutted back and forth, and as he

strutted he watched her from the corner of his eye and he thought he saw something like admiration creep into, her eyes. At this he strutted more than ever, and ever so slowly began to walk toward her.

She let him get quite near, then all in a flash she was gone. Reddy wanted to race after her just as he had before, but he didn't. He was learning, was Reddy. He knew that if he did, she would be frightened still more. So he stopped and strutted about as he had before and tried to appear not at all aware that she was anywhere about. Pretty soon he saw her peering at him as before, and to Reddy she seemed more lovely than ever. Little by little he drew near the place where she was hiding. This time he got nearer than before ere she ran away.

Very patiently Reddy did it all over again, and this time he called as gently as he knew how. She made no reply, but she let him get a little nearer. It had become a kind of game, the best game Reddy ever had played. Finally, she waited so that Reddy got near enough to softly touch her nose with his nose, and then as if frightened at her own boldness she darted away, looking over her shoulder to see if Reddy would follow.

STORY 1568. February 19, 1917

Beautiful Miss Swiftfoot

The little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest don't shake hands when they meet as we do. Certainly not. How could they? Their hands are not made for shaking. Instead they touch noses. At least some of them do. This is what Reddy Fox and the beautiful stranger had done in the Old Pasture. They had touched noses and then the beautiful stranger had darted away as if very much frightened at such boldness. You see, she was very shy and very timid. But as she darted away, she looked back over her shoulder to see if Reddy would follow, and somehow Reddy knew that she hoped that he would.

He didn't know how he knew, but know he did, that while she was afraid of him, she liked him and that she wouldn't run far. And Reddy was eager to follow. Yes, indeed, Reddy was eager to follow. The truth is Reddy felt that he just couldn't allow her out of his sight for even a minute. At the touch of her nose Reddy felt as if his heart had melted. Yes, sir, that is just the way he had felt. All that was hard and cruel and mean in his heart had seemed to melt right away and in place of these were a great gentleness and longing and love for this beautiful stranger. Reddy didn't know it was love because he didn't know much about love anyway, save selfish love, and a certain kind of love for Old Granny Fox. But this new feeling was wholly different. He felt that if only she would let him he would do anything under the sun for her.

So, of course, Reddy followed her when she darted away. He followed her, but he took the very greatest care not to frighten her anymore. He tried to make it plain to her that he wouldn't hurt her for the world—that he would be very, very gentle and kind to her. The beautiful stranger didn't run far and once more she and Reddy touched noses. Again she jumped away as if scared by her own boldness and patiently Reddy followed. So it happened over and over again, but each time she seemed just a wee bit

Illustrations. February 12 to February 17, 1917.

1562. He Makes a Hole in Paddy's Pond
"Now what can he be going to do?" muttered Old Man Coyote.

1563. Paddy the Beaver Grows Anxious
"I feel it in my bones that something is wrong," muttered Paddy.

1564. Farmer Brown's Boy Is Satisfied
"I believe that little rascal has found that hole and is filling it up already!" he exclaimed.
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1565. Reddy Fox Finds a Strange Track
"Nice weather, isn't it, Reddy? I'm glad you called."

1566. Reddy Fox Has a Funny Feeling
There, peering around the edge of a big rock, was the face of a stranger.

1567. The Timid Stranger
He tried to make himself appear very big and strong and handsome.

less afraid.

It wasn't long then before she was pretending, just to tease Reddy, and, of course, Reddy soon discovered this. Strange to say he liked this kind of teasing. For the first time in his life Reddy Fox enjoyed being teased. So they raced and romped until at last they were glad to rest, for both were tired. Side by side they laid down in a sunny sport.

"What is your name?" panted Reddy. "Miss Swiftfoot," replied the beautiful stranger shyly.

"That's a beautiful name, and it just fits you," replied Reddy.

"What makes you think so?" asked Miss Swiftfoot.

"The way you run," replied Reddy. "You can run faster than I can, and—and I didn't believe that there was a fox living who could do that."

He didn't say this at all boastfully. He WAS a fast runner and he knew it. If anyone had told him that he would meet a fox who could outrun him he would have laughed. He simply wouldn't have believed it. And now here he was actually telling Miss Swiftfoot that she was faster than he. The funny part is he seemed glad that it was so. He wasn't the least tiny bit jealous.

"What is your name?" asked Miss Swiftfoot.

"Reddy Fox," replied Reddy, proudly. "Everybody around here knows me. Where did you come from?"

"Over there," said Miss Swiftfoot, with a toss of her head which might have meant almost anywhere. "I think I must be going back now."

Reddy jumped to his feet in great alarm.

"O, don't! Don't do anything like that," he begged. "I—I—why, we've just got acquainted and we could have such good times together here. Do you know, you are the most beautiful Fox I've ever seen? You are. You simply are beautiful."

"Pshaw! You're just fooling," retorted Miss Swiftfoot, but it was plain to see that she was pleased. And in truth she was a very beautiful young Fox, slim of legs, slender, and wearing the blackest of stockings and the reddest of cloaks, and she carried proudly as perfect a tail as ever a Fox wore.

STORY 1569. February 20, 1917

Reddy Fox Brags

What slender, trim Miss Swiftfoot thought of Reddy Fox as side by side they rested in the Old Pasture and Reddy told her how beautiful she was only she herself can tell. What she thought of him later she did tell, but that is another story. Of one thing Reddy felt certain and that was that she didn't dislike him. If she had disliked him, she would have run away, for she had proved that she was swifter of foot than he. Once or twice Reddy thought that he had seen something like admiration in her eyes as she

looked at him. At least he liked to think that this is what it was.

Perhaps it was this look in her eyes that started him to bragging, or perhaps it was what Miss Swiftfoot said when he told her how beautiful he thought her and she had replied that he was fooling and had pretended not to believe he really meant it.

"You are very handsome yourself and you look very strong and brave," said Miss Swiftfoot, after Reddy had insisted that he had meant every word he had said. Right away Reddy's tongue was loosened and he began to brag, which you know is to boast. A little flattery will always start Reddy bragging. It is a failing of Reddy's which Old Granny Fox never succeeded in curing him of, although she tried her best to from the time he was a little fellow.

"A bragging tongue will soon or late,
Lead straight to trouble sure as fate."

is an old saying of Granny's that Reddy heard more times than he cared to remember. Yet, in spite of the fact that he had many times proved it to be true to his own discomfort, he never could let a chance to brag go by. It was a habit he simply couldn't break himself of. Perhaps he never really tried, or perhaps he really fooled himself. You know most of us like to be well thought of. Reddy especially wanted to be well thought of by beautiful Miss Swiftfoot. When she said that he was handsome and looked very strong and brave he swelled right up. Yes, sir, Reddy swelled right up. His vanity was tickled.

"I'm fairly strong," said he, trying to appear modest, "and I don't know of any one I'm afraid of."

Of course, this wasn't true. He was afraid of Old Man Coyote and Buster Bear and Bowser the Hound and Jimmy Skunk and Prickly Porky the Porcupine. Perhaps he forgot these or perhaps he meant that he wasn't afraid they ever would hurt him because he was smart enough to keep out of their way. This was true enough. But as for facing any one of them in a quarrel Reddy wouldn't dare to for a minute.

"I've lived all my life here in the Old Pasture and over yonder on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest and everybody knows me and is afraid of me," he continued, swelling up a little more. "No other Fox dares come over here to hunt."

"I've seen the tracks of another Fox over in the Green Forest," said Miss Swiftfoot softly.

"What's that!" exclaimed Reddy, the hair on his neck bristling. Then he laughed. "O, I know," said he. "Those were the tracks of Old Granny Fox. I take care of her."

He said this with a very grand air. I wonder what Granny would have said if she had heard him. I have an idea that she would have laughed right out What do you think?

"Yes," continued Reddy, "I take care of her. I'm very fond of her, you know, and she is getting old and feeble. I tell her she has nothing to worry about so long as I am here to look out for her. She need never worry for fear she'll go hungry, She knows I

won't allow anyone else on our hunting grounds. That is," he added hastily as Miss Swiftfoot drew back a little, "unless it is someone like you."

Miss Swiftfoot smiled and said, "Thank you," and Reddy went on bragging about what a wonderful hunter he was and how no one was smart enough to fool him. He was so intent on bragging that he didn't notice a stranger creeping nearer and nearer until a harsh voice exclaimed tauntingly, "Boaster!" Reddy whirled to look straight into the eyes of another Fox, a stranger.

STORY 1570. February 21, 1917

The Unpleasant Stranger

Seldom has Reddy Fox been more startled than he was when he whirled to stare straight into the eyes of a stranger fox. In the first place, it was so very, very unexpected, and in the second place there was something in those eyes glaring back into his that sent little chilly feelings creeping all over him. As for beautiful Miss Swiftfoot, she had given a little cry and ran away as only she could run.

The stranger was big, every bit as big as Reddy, and if anything, a little bigger. He was a little heavier, and Reddy saw at a glance that he was also a little older.

There were little scars on his face which told Reddy that he had been in many fights. It was very clear to Reddy that this stranger had seen much of the Great World, and also that he hadn't the least fear of Reddy. His lips were lifted ever so little from his teeth, giving his face a most unpleasant and scornful look. Without meaning to, Reddy backed a few steps.

"Who are you?" demanded Reddy. "Never mind who I am. Get out of my way," replied the stranger.

Again Reddy backed a few steps as the stranger advanced.

"Get out of this Old Pasture, and do it quickly, or you'll be sorry," growled Reddy, trying to look very fierce.

The stranger laughed and it was an unpleasant sounding laugh.

"Who'll make me?" he snapped.

"I will," retorted Reddy, and tried to make his voice sound very bold and savage.

"Gr-r-r-r!" snarled the stranger so suddenly and so savagely as he took a step toward Reddy that Reddy jumped to one side. As he did so he caught a glimpse of Miss Swiftfoot watching from a distance, and a feeling of shame swept over him.

"Gr-r-r-r-r!" said the stranger again. "Don't think that I'm afraid of such a silly boaster as you.

"I heard what you told Miss Swiftfoot and I wanted to laugh. Two like you couldn't make me leave the Old Pasture if I wanted to stay. Now get out of my way before I shake you to death. I haven't time to waste with you. I want that sly Miss

Swiftfoot, and I'm going to get her. Gr-r-r-r-r!"

There was no doubt in Reddy's mind that the stranger meant just what he said. It was plain that he didn't fear Reddy in the least and was quite ready and willing to prove it. On the other hand, Reddy WAS afraid. He never had fought another Fox and he didn't want to fight now. At least he didn't want to until the stranger mentioned Miss Swiftfoot. At the mention of her a great rage filled his heart, and for a minute crowded out fear.

He wouldn't fight for himself, but he would fight for her. That is he would if he had to. But perhaps it wouldn't be necessary.

"Perhaps she doesn't want to go with you," said he. "Why not leave it to her whether she wants to go with you or stay with me?"

"It doesn't make any difference whether she wants to go with me or not. I want her to and that's enough," growled the stranger. "You don't suppose I've followed her ever since last night to give her up to a whipper-snapper like you, do you? Now, trot along about your own business, and do it quickly!" The stranger rolled back his lips and showed all his long teeth.

Reddy glanced over to Miss Swiftfoot. It seemed to him that she looked very anxious. He knew that she looked very beautiful, and he couldn't bear the thought of not seeing her again. "Gr-r-r-r-r!" said Reddy in his turn.

STORY 1571. February 22, 1917

A Fight for a Lady

While fighting is a dreadful thing.
  A horrid thing to see,
It all depends upon the cause,
  If right or wrong it be.

There are times when it is just as wrong not to fight as ever it is to fight. When a wrong cannot be righted in any other way it is right to fight and wrong not to. It never is cowardly to refuse to fight when there is no just cause for fighting. In fact, often it is braver to refuse than to fight. But to refuse to fight when there is just cause to fight is cowardly.

Reddy Fox had no desire to fight that stranger there in the Old Pasture just for the sake of fighting. The truth is Reddy was afraid. Yes, sir, right down in his heart Reddy was afraid. He never had fought anybody as big and strong as this stranger, and he knew by the scars on the stranger's face that the latter had fought many battles. He knew, too, by a look in the stranger's eyes that the latter was not afraid, but instead was quite ready and willing to fight, and of course this didn't make Reddy feel any better. He guessed that the stranger knew just how he, Reddy, was feeling.

But Reddy felt that right was on his side. There is an unwritten law among the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows that each has certain hunting rights.

An unwritten law, you know, is an understanding among people which all respect.

The Old Pasture, the Green Meadows, and a part of the Green Forest, had been the hunting ground of Reddy and Old Granny Fox for so long that it was other generally understood that no foxes had a right to hunt there. So if there had been no other reason for fighting, Reddy would have felt that he was perfectly right in trying to drive this impudent stranger away, Still having that fear in his heart, I doubt if he would have fought had it not been for something else.

That something else was the fact that beautiful Miss Swiftfoot was watching him, and that Reddy already had given his heart to her. He had loved her at the very first sight of her. He wanted her to love him, wanted it more than he ever had wanted anything in his life before.

This impudent stranger had declared that he wanted her himself, and what was more was going to take her. Reddy knew that if he refused to fight, she would think him a coward. He wasn't sure that she loved him, although she had shown him that she liked him, but he was sure that she wouldn't love him if she thought him a coward. And so Reddy decided to fight.

"Gr-r-r-r-r!" snarled Reddy just as savagely as he knew how.

"Gr-r-r-r-r!" snarled the stranger, and like a flash sprang at Reddy.

Then began such a fight as the Old Pasture had not known for many a long day. Over and over they rolled, snapping, snarling, kicking, clawing.

Sometimes the stranger was on top and sometimes Reddy was on top. The stranger was big and strong, and he had learned how to fight. He knew every little trick of fighting. At first Reddy got all the worst of it. But he was strong himself, and he was younger. Moreover, he was no longer afraid. A great rage had driven out all fear. He was fighting not for himself alone, but for beautiful Miss Swiftfoot. His whole heart was in that fight, for he was fighting for his love.

Timidly, with both fear and hope in her eyes, Miss Swiftfoot crept nearer and nearer to watch. Which did she hope would win? Old Jed Thumper, the big gray rabbit, crept to the edge of his bull brier castle to watch, and grew so excited that he almost forgot he was watching his own enemies.

Blacky the Crow happened along, and as soon as he saw what was going on, he seated himself in a tree where he could watch and then screamed at the top of his lungs just from excitement. This brought his cousin, Sammy Jay, and Sammy started, right away to try to make more noise than Blacky. Everybody within hearing hurried over to watch that great fight.

But Reddy and the big stranger didn't know this. They had no eyes or ears or thoughts but for each other. And so they bit and kicked and scratched and snarled and rolled over and over, and everybody wondered who would win. It was a great fight. Yes, sir, it was a great fight. Everybody said so.

STORY 1572. February 23, 1917

Beautiful Miss Swiftfoot is Glad

Who knows he battles for the right
Within his heart has won the fight.

And whoever in his own heart has already won the fight is almost sure to win the real fight. You know right makes might. It was just so with Reddy Fox in his great fight with the stranger. For a while it looked very much as if the stranger would win, as if he must win. He knew every little trick of fighting, and for a while Reddy certainly did get the worst of it. But Reddy's wits are sharp, as you and I know, and he is very cunning. If the stranger worked a trick once Reddy never gave him a chance to do it over again. He learned that trick and watched out for it. By and by he, tried some of these newly learned tricks himself.

All the time, even when it looked very much as if he would be beaten, Reddy kept saying over and over again to himself, "I'm right, and I'm going to win. I'm right, and I'm going to win." He said it so many times that at last he just KNEW it was so. He didn't have the least bit of doubt about it. He was fighting for the right, for his rights, and the rights of beautiful Miss Swiftfoot, and because of this he couldn't lose. It was right then that he began to hold his own. The stranger had the advantage of having fought many battles and knowing how to make the most of every opportunity, but Reddy had an advantage which he didn't realize at first, but which after a while began to show. He was younger than the stranger; and so when they paused for breath, as they had to every little while, he regained his strength faster than the other.

And then, too, Reddy's heart was in that battle more than was the heart of the stranger, and this made a difference. Little by little the stranger grew weaker. Reddy knew this by the fact that, he was more often on top than was the stranger. The latter was growing very tired while Reddy was growing stronger. At least that is the way he felt. And then as they paused quite out of breath Reddy became aware for the first time of Blacky the Crow and Sammy Jay and the others who, were watching. All were screaming and shouting and Reddy could hardly believe his own ears at what he heard.

"Go it, Reddy! Teach him to stay where he belongs!" screamed Blacky the Crow, with whom Reddy had so often quarreled.

"Don't let him whip you! Fight, Reddy! Fight!" shrieked Sammy Jay, on whom Reddy always had looked as one who delighted to see him in trouble. It was just the same way with all the others—all were urging him on. Even Old Jed Thumper, the big gray rabbit that Reddy so often had tried to catch, was jumping up and down in the most excited way and begging him to fight harder. It was very strange. Reddy couldn't understand it. You see he didn't realize that though these neighbors of his often quarreled with him, and usually seemed glad to see him in trouble, and called him bad names, they still regarded him as one of themselves and were loyal to him and were ready and glad to take his part against an outsider, a stranger who had no business there.

Loyalty is a very splendid thing, isn't it? It is the thing that makes us forget, or at least put aside, our private quarrels and stand by each other in times of great trouble or

danger.

Reddy didn't understand it then, but he knew that the sound of their voices urging him to do his best seemed to give him new strength and courage. "Gr-r-r-r! Gr-r-r-r-r-r!" he snarled as he once more sprang at the stranger. This time he got a hold that the stranger couldn't break, and he shook and worried and growled and fought with a fury such as he never before had known. Soon he noticed that the stranger hardly struggled at all.

"Had enough?" growled Reddy. "Will you leave and never come back?"

"Yes," said the stranger in a faint voice.

Reddy let go. The stranger struggled to his feet and limped away slowly. Once he turned and snarled, then limped on again. Reddy held his head proudly as he watched him out of sight. His coat was torn and he had many wounds, but he had won his first great fight, and for the moment he forgot all else.

"I'm so glad," said a timid voice. Reddy turned. There was Miss Swiftfoot, and in her eyes was the look that Reddy had longed to see there.

STORY 1573. February 24, 1917

The Planning of a New Home

When Reddy Fox looked into the eyes of beautiful Miss Swiftfoot and saw in them the look he had so longed to see, the look that told him that she thought him the handsomest, bravest, truest young fox in the world, his own heart was filled with the greatest of all happiness, the happiness of love. He forgot the great battle he had just fought. He forgot all about the beaten stranger. He forgot his neighbors looking on. He even forgot to boast of what he had done, and when Reddy forgets to boast he is very forgetful indeed.

"I'm so glad," repeated Miss Swiftfoot timidly.

"So glad of what?" asked Reddy, although he knew.

"So glad you won that dreadful fight," replied Miss Swiftfoot. "My, how strong you are and how brave! Do—do you think that horrid stranger will come back?"

Reddy grinned.

"No," said he, "I don't think he will. I guess he has had all he wants of the Old Pasture. I guess he knows that it isn't a very healthy place for him around here. Ouch!"

He had suddenly discovered that he was getting very stiff and lame, and he ached and smarted in ever so many places where the stranger's teeth and claws had torn his skin.

Instantly beautiful Miss Swiftfoot was all tenderness and pity.

"Are you dreadfully hurt?" she asked. Then as Reddy shook his head and pretended that he didn't mind his hurts at all, she came over to him and began to lick

his wounds.

"You are, too!" she cried. "Now you lie right still and let me take care of you. What did you want to fight for? I think it's horrid to fight."

Reddy chuckled right out. "I fought for you," he said simply.

"I know you did, and you're just the bravest, dearest fox in all the Great World, the very bravest, dearest fox that ever lived, replied Miss Swiftfoot, all the time tenderly licking Reddy's wounds. You know that is what the little people who wear fur always do to wounds. The gentle touch of her tongue made Reddy almost wish that he had twice as many hurts.

"Where is your home?" he asked.

"I—I guess I haven't any," replied Miss Swiftfoot in a very low voice. "Will you make your home here with me?" asked Reddy eagerly.

"I—I don't know, replied Miss Swiftfoot bashfully. "Do you really and truly want me to?"

"Really and truly I do. I never wanted anything so much, in all my life," cried Reddy. "Will you? O, please say you will. You see, I love you so much I never could be happy again if you should go away. Will you do it?"

"Y-e-s," whispered Miss Swiftfoot very softly and shyly.

Reddy's heart gave a great bound. "I'll be good to you always," he promised.

"I'm sure of it," replied Miss Swiftfoot, laying her face against his.

"We'll plan our home right away!" cried Reddy joyfully. "Shall it be up here in the Old Pasture or down on the Green Meadows or over in the Green Forest? I know splendid places in all three."

"Perhaps we better look around a little before we decide, but I think I'd like the Old Pasture best because it is here we found each other," replied Miss Swiftfoot.

Then, Reddy's hurts having been dressed, they began to talk as fast as their tongues could go, planning their new home. Old Jed Thumper, the big gray rabbit, who lives in the Old Pasture, heard them and frowned.

"More trouble for me," he grumbled. More trouble for me. Still, I'm glad Reddy won that fight."

But no one was so glad as Reddy himself, unless it was beautiful Miss Swiftfoot, and I'm sure I wouldn't dare say which of the two was the most glad.

STORY 1574. February 26, 1917

Old Granny Fox is Told the News

"Did you ever notice how often it happens that the ones most interested are among the very last to hear a bit of news? It happens this way time and time again. Now, of

Illustrations. February 19 to February 24, 1917.

1568. Beautiful Miss Swiftfoot
"What is your name?" panted Reddy.

1569. Reddy Fox Brags
Reddy whirled to look straight into the eyes of another fox, a stranger.

1570. The Unpleasant Stranger
"Never mind who I am. Get out of my way," replied the stranger..

1571. A Fight for a Lady
Miss Swiftfoot crept nearer to watch.

1572. Beautiful Miss Swiftfoot is Glad
"Go it, Reddy! Teach him to stay where he belongs!" screamed Blacky the Crow.

1573. The Planning of a New Home
"I'm so glad," repeated Miss Swiftfoot timidly.

course, everybody who saw that great fight in the Old Pasture between Reddy Fox and the big stranger and afterward saw beautiful Miss Swiftfoot tenderly licking Reddy's hurts knew just what it meant.

Old Jed Thumper, the gray old Rabbit who is the father of Mrs. Peter, as you all know, scowled as he watched Reddy and Miss Swiftfoot, peering out at them from his bull-brier castle. Yet, despite the scowl, there was a twinkle in his eyes, for it is very difficult to look on such happiness as was Reddy's and Miss Swiftfoot's and not have a little of it sort of reflected in your own heart.

"I know what that means," grumbled Old Jed Thumper. "I know what that means. It means that that scamp Reddy has won the heart of that foolish young Fox and that she is quite willing to become Mrs. Reddy. And that means that my troubles and dangers will be doubled or at least will be increased a third. Here I've had Granny Fox and Reddy Fox to be always on the watch for, and now I will have Mrs. Reddy. Oh, deary me! Oh, deary me! This is a tough old world. Just as if I didn't have trouble enough before! But," and once more there was a twinkle in his eyes, "I'm glad that young scamp is going to settle down. With a wife to look out for he'll have to. I rather think it will be the making of Reddy Fox."

Of course, Blacky the Crow, and Sammy Jay, and the others who saw all that had happened understood what it meant. Blacky looked over at Sammy Jay and winked.

"Reddy Fox has lost his heart
And doesn't seem to mind it,"

Said he with a chuckle.

"Go ask Miss Swiftfoot where it is,
And there I think you'll find it,"

retorted Sammy Jay, chuckling in his turn. Then he spread his blue wings and started away to spread the news, for Sammy Jay is quite equal to Peter Rabbit in love of being the first to tell a bit of news.

Now, Sammy has a very shrewd little head, as you all know, and he guessed right away that probably old Granny Fox knew nothing about what was going on. The idea of being the first to tell Granny tickled Sammy almost to death. So, as fast as his wings, could take him, he hurried to find old Granny Fox. She wasn't at home.

At least, if she was, she made no sign, in spite of Sammy's screaming outside her door. Disappointed, he flew over to the Green Forest to look for her and luck was with him, for, presently he caught a glimpse of her red cloak as she trotted along the Lone Little Path.

"Granny! Granny Fox!" screamed Sammy.

Granny paused and waited for Sammy to catch up.

"Well," said she, "what is it? You seem very much excited about something."

"I am," replied Sammy. "I wanted to be the first to tell you how glad I am for you."

Granny was puzzled, but she was too shrewd to let on that she was puzzled.

"Thank you," said she. "That is very nice of you, Sammy Jay. I am glad to know that at least one of my neighbors is glad for me. I hope the others will be."

It was Sammy who was puzzled now. He had felt so sure that Granny couldn't possibly know about Reddy and Miss Swiftfoot that he had meant to tease Granny a little before he told her. But here she was talking as if she knew all about it. Sammy looked at her sharply, but there wasn't the least bit of curiosity in Granny's shrewd old face.

"Have you met her yet?" asked Sammy.

"Not yet, but I hope to soon," replied Granny in the most matter-of-fact voice.

"She does know all about it," thought Sammy. "Someone else must have met her and told her." Then he said aloud: "Reddy fought a perfectly splendid battle and I'm glad he won. He seems very happy. How does it feel to know that you are going to have a new relative?"

Then clever old Granny Fox guessed what it was all about. "It seems very good indeed," said she. "For a long time, I've been wanting Reddy to settle down and now I guess he will. You will excuse me now if I hurry along, won't you, Sammy? I want to be home when they get there."

Sammy watched her out of sight. "I wonder," said he, "how much she does know."

STORY 1575. February 27, 1917

Old Granny Fox Welcomes Mrs. Reddy

Sammy Jay didn't know what to think. He had been sure, absolutely sure, that old Granny Fox couldn't possibly know about Reddy and Miss Swiftfoot, who was now to be Mrs. Reddy, and that he would have the fun of telling her the news and seeing her surprise. The truth is Sammy thought that Granny Fox would be quite upset. But Granny appeared to have known all the time what Sammy had to tell her and had seemed neither surprised nor upset. Sammy suddenly felt a new respect for old Granny Fox. She must be very clever indeed to know things which had just happened when she herself wasn't present.

Of course, the truth is Granny had artfully led Sammy on to tell her the news while pretending that she already knew it. O, yes, indeed, Granny is clever. So Sammy had no idea what Granny's real feelings were and he wondered and wondered. There were others who wondered, too, what Granny would say, and one of these was Reddy Fox himself. The fact is Reddy was a little afraid of what Granny might do or say. You see, Reddy and Granny had lived together and hunted together in the Old Pasture and on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest so long that Reddy was more than a little fearful that Granny would not like it at all to have to share the hunting grounds with another.

Reddy knew that he ought to hurry right home and tell Granny that now there was to be a Mrs. Reddy he would have to leave Granny and make a home of his own. But he dreaded it so that he kept putting it off and putting it off. It was Mrs. Reddy herself who, you know, used to be Miss Swiftfoot, who finally got Reddy to do what he knew that he ought to do.

"Don't you think, my dear, that we ought to tell Granny of our happiness, and that she and I ought to become acquainted? You know I never have met her," said Mrs. Reddy.

Reddy agreed that they ought to, but even then, he hung back. Finally he started for home, Mrs. Reddy going with him. As they drew near the house of Granny Fox, Mrs. Reddy hung back shyly. "You go ahead and tell her," said she.

So, while Mrs. Reddy waited timidly at a little distance Reddy went on. Old Granny Fox was sitting on her doorstep. Now Reddy wasn't the least bit ashamed. In fact, he was very, very proud. But if you could have seen him as he drew near Granny Fox you would have thought him ashamed. You see he was uncertain how Granny would act, and so sort of bashful, that instead of swaggering up as he usually did, he looked sheepish. Yes, sir, that is the way he looked. Granny's keen old eyes twinkled as she noted his torn coat and the marks of teeth and claws on his face.

"Reddy," said she, looking as severe as she knew how, "you've been fighting."

"Yes'm," replied Reddy very meekly. "What for?" demanded Granny sternly.

"Because—because," mumbled Reddy and stopped at a loss to know just what to say.

Granny's eyes twinkled more than ever and she began to chuckle. "Out with it, you young scamp, out with it," said she. "You fought for a lady, didn't you? Don't be ashamed to own up to it, I know all about it. You could have had no better cause for fighting. Your grandfather fought for me just the same way, and your father fought for your mother. If you hadn't fought as you did, I wouldn't have had anything more to do with you. No, sir, I wouldn't. Now where is my new granddaughter? Why don't you bring her to your old Granny so that I may give her a welcome?"

Reddy could hardly believe his ears. He gave Granny one long, grateful look, then away he bounded with a little bark of joy and two minutes after he was back, with Mrs. Reddy shyly following him.

"Welcome, my dear," said Granny Fox. "Come here and let me look at you. Reddy has shown better taste than I feared he would, for you are very beautiful, my dear. I think we are going to get along together very nicely. Of course, you and Reddy will make a home of your own now and if I can help you at all I shall be very glad to. Reddy looks to me pretty well used up. He must have had a hard fight. What do you say if you and I go hunting together tonight and get his dinner for him?"

STORY 1576. February 28, 1917.

Granny Fox is Quite Satisfied.

'Tis those who always try their best
Who never need to fear a test.

You cannot do better than your best. No one can. Your best may not be as good as the best of someone else, but this doesn't matter if you have done your best. The only thing that really matters is giving up trying to do your best when you see someone else doing better than you are. It is the trying that really counts. So one who always tries has nothing to worry about when tested quite unexpectedly.

Now when clever old Granny Fox proposed that she and Mrs. Reddy, who, you know, was formerly beautiful Miss Swiftfoot, go hunting that night and leave Reddy behind she did it to test Mrs. Reddy. You see she didn't know a thing about Mrs. Reddy and she suspected that Reddy himself didn't know much more than she did, which was quite true.

"If she won't go," thought shrewd old Granny, "it will show that there is nothing to her but good looks and Reddy has made a great mistake. If she does go, I will have a chance to see what kind of a hunter she is and whether or not she is going to be willing to do her share in making a home. She is a very nice looking young person, but it is what people do and not how they look that tells what they really are. When I see what kind of a hunter she is I'll know what kind of a mate she will be for Reddy, and if he has done a wise or a foolish thing."

Of course, she didn't even hint at such a thing to Reddy and Mrs. Reddy. No, indeed! She merely suggested they try to get Reddy a dinner because he was in no condition to hunt for himself. Right away Reddy flared up. If there was going to be any hunting that night, he was going to do it. It was his place to. From now on he was going to do all the hunting for Mrs. Reddy. Granny turned her head to hide a smile. But she didn't say anything because Mrs. Reddy didn't give her a chance.

"You'll do nothing of the kind," said Mrs. Reddy, in such a decided tone that Reddy stared at her in surprise. "You are going to stay right here tonight and take care of your hurts.

"You are so stiff and lame from that awful fight that you couldn't catch a mouse if he ran right under your nose this minute. Come, Granny, we'll see what we can find in the way of a dinner for this foolish fellow."

Granny chuckled. She liked Mrs. Reddy's spirit. So off they started, leaving Reddy to grumble to his heart's content. He did start to follow, but he soon found out that he was too lame and stiff to hunt that night. He couldn't begin to keep up with them, let alone trying to catch anything. Mrs. Reddy trotted behind old Granny Fox, as was quite proper out of respect for her age and wisdom. This pleased Granny. She knew full well that had Reddy been there he would have been rushing ahead, for Reddy is headstrong.

"She's had a good bringing-up," muttered Granny.

Over to the Green Forest they went to hunt for woodmice, and there while she

pretended to hunt, she really spent most of her time watching Mrs. Reddy.

The latter did not appear to notice this. She gave all her attention to hunting. She used her eyes and her ears and her nose every minute. She didn't overlook a single possible hiding-place of a fat wood-mouse. And she was quick. My, how quick she was! She had caught two before Granny had even had a good smell of one. But then, you know, Granny wasn't trying her best. She was too busy watching to see if Mrs. Reddy knew all the little tricks that a good hunter should know. Instead of hunting for mice Granny was hunting for faults in Mrs. Reddy, and all the time growing more and more satisfied because she could find so few.

"She's just the mate Reddy needs," chuckled Granny to herself as at last they turned homeward, Mrs. Reddy proudly carrying three fat mice for Reddy's dinner.

STORY 1577. March 1, 1917

How Peter Learned of Mrs. Reddy

It seems funny, doesn't it, that such an important thing as the coming of Mrs. Reddy Fox to the Green Meadows should happen and Peter Rabbit be one of the last to hear of it? But so it was. Usually, Peter is one of the first to know of what is going on because he is, as you know, a great gossip. But once in a while it happens that even gossips miss a bit of choice news, and it was this way with Peter. For some reason or other or for no reason at all that particular and interesting bit of news missed Peter's long ears altogether.

So Peter had no idea that there was now someone else to watch out for and started off for the Green Forest in his usual happy-go-lucky manner as, soon as he was sure that Roughleg the Hawk had gone to bed for the night. Mrs. Peter tried in vain to keep him in the Old Brier Patch. She never has approved and she never will approve of the way Peter wanders about. As for herself, nothing would induce her to go with him. She remained right there in the dear, Old Brier Patch and worried just as she does whenever Peter is out of her sight.

It was a very pleasant night, for Mistress Moon was doing her best to make up for the absence of jolly Mr. Sun, and she flooded the Green Meadows and the Green Forest as far as she could with silvery light. And because the ground was covered with snow it was really quite bright and very beautiful. No wonder Peter wanted to be out and about. It was a bewitching kind of a night.

As yet, as Peter well knew, it was the most dangerous kind of a night for him to get far from the dear Old Brier Patch or a bramble-tangle, for on such a night all the keen-eyed hunters who see at night would be sure to be abroad. Peter meant to be careful. Of course. Peter's intentions always are good. So off he went, lipperty-lipperty-lip, meaning well but just as heedless as ever. Mrs. Peter sighed as she watched him disappear.

An hour later as Peter was hopping along the Lone Little Path, he glanced behind him just in time to see what looked in the moonlight very like a shadow move ever

so little. Peter's heart gave a little jump. "It is perfectly still and shadows don't move when it is that way," thought he. Remembering that unless you are sure you have been seen it usually is safest to sit tight, Peter squatted and sat perfectly still, his eyes fixed on that shadow.

Peter didn't move and the shadow didn't move. Peter sat there forever so long and still the shadow didn't move any more than did the other shadows all about. At last he concluded he must have been mistaken in thinking he saw it move in the first place. It was too fine a night to spend sitting still. Peter hopped on a few steps and looked back. The shadow hadn't moved.

"I was mistaken," thought Peter, and started along, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

He was still a little doubtful, however, and once more looked back. This time the shadow certainly was not where he had last seen it. Now the light from Mistress Moon fell full on it.

"Reddy Fox!" exclaimed Peter and looked ahead just a wee bit anxiously for the nearest bramble-tangle. It was nearer than he had thought it might be and Peter chuckled.

"I'll tease Reddy a little," thought he. "I know just how fast Reddy can run, so I'll let him get a little nearer and then beat him to the bramble-tangle. He can't possibly catch me, but I'll let him think he can."

So Peter kicked up his heels and called, "I see you, Reddy, but you can't catch me!" Then he started on easily toward the bramble-tangle,

But he wasn't half way there before he discovered that if he would get there, he had got to run with all his might. Never had he known Reddy to run so swiftly or so lightly. "What's got into him to make him run like this," thought Peter as he bounded along as fast as he could make his long legs take him, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

Then for a few minutes he was too busy wondering if he would reach that bramble-tangle in time to think of anything else. Just as he dived into one of his little paths in the bramble-tangle the snap of teeth right at his very heels sent a cold shiver all over him. If he had had to make just one jump more to reach safety, he would have been caught.

"I never have known Reddy to run like that," thought Peter and turned to look at his pursuer. "Why-why, it isn't Reddy at all!" exclaimed Peter.

"No, it's Mrs. Reddy," replied the stranger grinning through the brambles at Peter.

STORY 1578. March 2, 1917

Peter and Mrs. Peter Almost Quarrel

When loving people disagree
It is a sorry thing to see.

That is what almost happened in the dear old Brier Patch after Peter Rabbit reached home with the news about Mrs. Reddy Fox. Peter waited in the bramble-tangle beside the Lone Little Path in the Green Forest into which Mrs. Reddy had chased him until he was quite sure that it was safe for him to start for home. He knew that that was the best place for him if he wanted to keep a whole skin. Besides, he was fairly boiling over with desire to tell Mrs. Peter the news. So the minute he was quite sure that the way was clear he started lipperty-lipperty-lip for the dear Old Brier Patch, and he wasted no time in getting there.

Mrs. Peter saw him coming and she knew by the way he was hurrying that he had something important on his mind.

"What is it, Peter?" she asked anxiously, as soon as he was near enough to hear.

"News! Great news!" exclaimed Peter as soon as he could get his breath. "There is a Mrs. Reddy Fox now. What do you think of that?"

"I think it is the worst news I have heard for a long time," replied little Mrs. Peter in a most decided tone of voice.

Peter opened his eyes very wide and stared at Mrs. Peter in surprise. "Why, Mrs. Peter, how you do talk!" he exclaimed. "Aren't you glad for Reddy Fox? Now he'll have a home of his own and think how happy he'll be. Ever since we've had our little home, I've been sorry for those who live alone. So now I'm glad for Reddy Fox."

Little Mrs. Peter turned up her wabbly little nose. "How you talk, Peter said she. "It is all right to be glad for Reddy, but what about us?"

"What about us?" repeated Peter, looking puzzled.

"Yes, what about us?" snapped little Mrs. Peter. "If Reddy has brought a Mrs. Reddy to live on the Green Meadows that means three Foxes to watch out for, doesn't it? There will be Reddy and Mrs. Reddy and old Granny Fox. And if by and by there are some baby Reddys it will be worse still."

"I hadn't thought of that," confessed Peter.

"That's the trouble with you, Peter Rabbit, you never do think," retorted Mrs. Peter, sharply. "I don't know of any worse news you could have brought unless it was that there is a Mrs. Coyote. Goodness knows we have had dangers enough in the past."

"It was hard enough to bring up a family of children safely as it was, but now it will be twice as hard. I hope Mrs. Reddy is a foolish young thing and can be easily fooled. Have you seen her?"

"Yes," confessed Peter. "The fact is she almost caught me. She is very fast on her feet. She is much swifter than Reddy. I mistook her for him and she all but caught me."

"And yet you come home and tell me the news as if it was something good!" sniffed little Mrs Peter. "Sometimes I think you haven't any sense at all in that head of yours. It may be very nice for Reddy Fox, but how about us?"

"I didn't think about us at all." confessed Peter.

“Didn’t think! Didn’t think! That’s it, you didn’t think! You never do think!” stormed little Mrs Peter who was working herself up into something very like real anger. “I suppose by the time one of our precious babies was caught by this Mrs Reddy you might possibly begin to think.”

“Never mind, my dear,” replied Peter mildly. “I guess you are quite right as usual. I know I’m a very heedless fellow. I was so glad for Reddy that I didn’t give a thought to the rest of us. I suppose it will make it harder for a great many on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest, but it is nothing we can help and so we must make the best of it. All we have to do is to be a little extra careful.”

“And stay at home nights,” added little Mrs. Peter with a meaning look at Peter.

Peter looked sheepish. Then he kissed Mrs. Peter and promised to try to do better. And that was the end of what was almost a quarrel.

STORY 1579. March 3, 1917

Mr. and Mrs. Reddy Choose a Home

Deciding where to make a home is quite as important a matter to the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest as it is to us humans, and sometimes they spend almost as much time about it as we do. Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy were in no special hurry. They were of no mind to use an old house, of course not. As long as they were to have a brand-new home all their own, they must have a brand new house to make it in. Such a handsome young couple starting out together in an old house wouldn’t do at all. So they must dig a new house, and as there could be no digging until Jack Frost should start back for his home in the Far North and so soften the earth, they had plenty of time in which to pick out just the place to suit them.

So Reddy showed Mrs. Reddy all the pleasant and secret places of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, for no one knew them better than he. From place to place he led her, places which he often had thought he would like to have a home in. But Mrs. Reddy had some fault to find with each. This one was too open, and their house would be too easily seen by any who chanced that way. That one was too near Farmer Brown’s; it would make her nervous every time she heard Bowser the Hound bark. Another was too deep in the Green Forest. It was too dark and gloomy there; there must be something for the babies to play in. A fourth she was sure would be altogether too damp; dampness wouldn’t do at all. A fifth was very nice, but it was too near the home of old Granny Fox. Mrs. Reddy didn’t believe in having a relative so near.

Every place he could think of on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest, and there were very many nice places, Reddy took her to, and every time she shook her head and pointed out some fault. Sometimes Reddy thought she imagined these faults, but he didn’t say so. No, indeed, he didn’t say so. He was too clever, for that. Besides he wanted Mrs. Reddy wholly pleased. You see, for the first time in his life Reddy was thinking of someone besides himself. He was learning what it means to be unselfish. At last he had to tell her that he didn’t know of another place to look.

“Have you forgotten the Old Pasture?” asked Mrs. Reddy.

Then Reddy remembered what Mrs. Reddy had said when they first met; how she had been quite sure that she would want to live in the Old Pasture because it was there that they had found each other and that Reddy had fought his great battle for her.

“I understand now what was the matter with all the other places,” thought Reddy. “She had made up her mind that we would live in the Old Pasture and I’ve just wasted time showing her these other places.”

But he didn’t say this aloud, but pretended that he had forgotten all about the Old Pasture, and led the way there. No sooner were they there than Mrs. Reddy took the lead and Reddy meekly followed. Every nook and corner in the Old Pasture they visited, and when Mrs. Reddy was quite sure that there was no more of it to see she led the way to a little opening among the bushes where on a gentle slope the sun lay warm for a large part of the day.

Near the upper part of this opening was a great rock and behind it and on two sides of it the bushes grew and some young trees.

“This is the place where we will dig our house,” declared Mrs. Reddy. “Did you ever see such a splendid place?” Then, without waiting for a reply, she rattled on. “We’ll dig right down under that rock. I know by the looks that we can have a couple of secret back doors up there among the bushes. If any of those men creatures should happen to find it, they can’t dig it open the way they could out on the Green Meadows because that big rock is in the way. But I don’t believe any of them will find it. I don’t believe anybody ever will find it. O, Reddy, I wish we could begin digging right away. Aren’t you glad we’ve decided where we are going to have our home?”

“Yes, my dear,” replied Reddy, then chuckled to himself as he thought how little he had to do with the deciding.

“Now,” said Mrs. Reddy in a very decided tone, “we must keep away from here until it is time to dig. We don’t want anybody to suspect our secret.” And with a last look about she led the way back toward the Green Meadows.

STORY 1580. March 5, 1917

Bobby Coon Has a Bad Dream

Some dreams are good and some are bad;
  Some dreams are light and airy;
Some dreams I think are woven by
  The worst bind of a fairy.

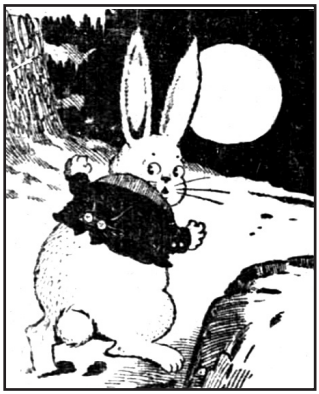
Dreams are such queer things, so very real when all the time they are unreal, that sometimes I think they must be the work of fairies,—happy dreams the work of good fairies and bad dreams the work of bad fairies. I guess you’ve had both kinds. I know I have many times. However, Bobby Coon says that fairies have nothing to do with dreams. Bobby ought to know, for he spends most of the winter asleep, and it is only

Illustrations. February 26 to March 3, 1917.

1574. Old Granny Fox is Told the News
Blacky looked over to Sammy Jay and winked.

1575. Old Granny Fox Welcomes Mrs. Reddy
"Welcome, my dear," said Granny Fox. "Come here and let me look at you."

1576. Granny Fox is Quite Satisfied
She didn't overlook a hiding place for a wood mouse.



1577. How Peter Rabbit Learned of Mrs. Reddy
Peter looked back — The shadow hadn't moved.

1578. Peter and Mrs. Peter Almost Quarrel
"News! Great News!" exclaimed Peter as soon as he could get his breath.

1579. Mr. and Mrs. Reddy Choose a Home
"O, Reddy, I wish we could begin digging right away."

when you are asleep that you have really, truly dreams.

Bobby had kept awake as long as there was anything to eat, but when Jack Frost froze everything hard, and rough Brother North Wind brought the storm-clouds that covered the Green Forest with snow, Bobby climbed into his warm bed inside the big hollow chestnut tree which he called his, curled up comfortably, and went to sleep. He didn't care a hair of his ringed tail how cold it was or how Brother North Wind howled and shrieked and blustered. He was so fat that it made him wheeze and puff whenever he tried to hurry during the last few days he was abroad, and this fat helped to keep him warm while he slept, and also kept him from waking from hunger.

Bobby didn't sleep right straight through the winter as does Johnny Chuck. Once in a great while he would wake up, especially if the weather had turned rather warm. He would yawn a few times and then crawl up to his doorway and peep out to see how things were looking outside. Sometimes he would climb down from his home and take a little walk for exercise. But he never went far, and soon returned for another long nap.

As it began to get towards the end of winter his naps were shorter. He was no longer fat. In fact, his stomach complained a great deal of being empty. Perhaps you know what it is like to have a stomach complain that way. It is very disturbing. It gave Bobby no peace while he was awake, and when he was asleep it gave him bad dreams. Bobby knew very well that no fairies had anything to do with those dreams. They came from a bothersome, empty, complaining stomach and nothing else.

It was about the time that Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy were house hunting that Bobby had the worst dream of all. He had prowled around a little the night before but had found nothing wherewith to satisfy his bothersome stomach. So he had gone back to bed very much out of sorts and almost as soon as he was asleep he began to dream. At first the dreams were not so very bad, though bad enough. They were mostly of delicious things to eat which always disappeared just as he was about to taste them. They made him grunt funny little grunts and snarl funny little impatient snarls in his sleep, you know.

But at last he began to have a really, truly, bad dream. It was one of the worst dreams Bobby ever had had. He dreamed that he was walking through the Green Forest, minding his own affairs, when he met a great giant. Being afraid of the great giant, he ran with all his might and hid in a hollow log. No sooner was he inside that hollow log than up came the great giant and began to beat on that hollow log with a great club. Every blow made a terrible noise inside that hollow log. It was like being inside a drum with someone beating it. It filled Bobby's ears with a dreadful roaring. It made his head ache as if it would split. It sent cold shivers all over him. It filled him with dreadful fear and despair. Yes, indeed, it was a bad dream, a very, very bad dream!

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 1)

STORY 1581. March 6, 1917

Bobby Coon Doesn't Know He's Awake

"Oh tell me, someone, if you will
Am I awake or dreaming still?"

So cried Bobby Coon to no one in particular, because no one was there to hear him. Bobby was in a dreadful state of mind. He couldn't tell for the life of him whether he was awake, or asleep and dreaming, and I cannot think of a much worse state of mind than that, can you?

There was that dreadful dream Bobby Coon had had, the dream of the dreadful giant who had chased him into a hollow log and then beat on that log with a great club, frightening Bobby almost to death, filling his ears with a terrible roaring sound that made his head ache, and sending cold shivers all over him. Bobby was trying to make up his mind to rush out of that hollow log in spite of the dreadful giant, all in his dream you know, when suddenly his eyes flew open and there he was safe in his bed in the hollow chestnut tree which he called his own.

Bobby gave a happy little sigh of relief, it seemed so good to find that dreadful experience only a dream. "Phew!" he exclaimed. "That was a bad dream!" And then right on top of that he gave a little squeal of fear. There was that awful pounding again! Was he still dreaming? Was he awake? For the life of him Bobby couldn't tell. There was that same dreadful pounding he had heard in the hollow log, but he wasn't in the hollow log; he was safe at home in his own warm bed. Had he somehow reached home without knowing it, in the strange way that things are done in dreams, and had the dreadful giant followed him? That must be it. It must be that he was still dreaming. He wished that he would wake up.

Bobby closed his eyes as tightly as he knew how for a few minutes. Pound, pound, pound, sounded the dreadful blows. Then he opened his eyes. Surely this was his hollow tree, and certainly he felt very much awake. There was the sunlight peeping in at his doorway high overhead. Yet still those dreadful blows sounded—pound, pound, pound. His head ached still, harder than ever. And with every blow he jumped, and a cold shiver ran over him from the roots of his tail to the tip of his nose.

Never in all his life had Bobby known such a mixed-up feeling. "Is this I or isn't it I?" he whimpered. "Am I dreaming and think I'm awake, or am I awake and still dreaming'? I know what I'll do; I'll bite my tail, and if I feel it, I'll know that I must be awake."

So Bobby took the tip of his tail in his mouth and bit it gently. Then he wondered if he really did feel it or just seemed to feel it. So he bit it again, and this time he bit harder.

"Ouch!" cried Bobby. "That hurt. I must be awake. I'm sure I'm awake. But if I'm awake, what dreadful thing is happening? Is there a real giant outside pounding on my tree?"

Then Bobby noticed something else. With every blow his house seemed to tremble. At first he thought he imagined it, but when he put his hands against the wall, he felt it tremble. It gave him a horrid sinking feeling inside. He was sure now that he was awake, very much awake. He was sure, too, that something dreadful was happening to

his hollow tree, and he couldn't imagine what it could be. And what is more, he was afraid to climb up to his doorway and look out to see.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 2, "Bobby Bites His Own Tail")

STORY 1582. March 7, 1917

Bobby Coon Has a Horrible Fright

Poor, poor Bobby Coon. Now he was sure that he was really and truly awake, he almost wished that he hadn't tried to find out. It would have been some little comfort to have been able to keep his first feeling that maybe it was all a bad dream. But now that he knew positively he was awake, he knew that this terrible pounding, which at first had been part of that bad dream, was also real as the fact that he was awake. The fact is, he could no longer doubt that something terrible was happening to his house, the big hollow chestnut-tree he had lived in so long.

With every blow, and the blows followed each other so fast that he couldn't count them, the big tree trembled, and Bobby trembled with it. What could it mean? What could be going on outside? He wanted to climb up to his doorway and look out, but somehow he didn't dare to. He was afraid of what he might see. Yes, sir, Bobby Coon was afraid to climb up to his doorway and look out for fear he might see something that would frighten him more than he was frightened then, though how he could possibly have been any more frightened I don't know. Yet all the time it didn't seem to him that he could stay where he was another minute. No, sir, it didn't. He was too frightened to go and too frightened to stay. Now can you think of anything worse than that?

The tree trembled more and more, and by and by it began to do more than tremble; with a dreadful, a very dreadful sinking of his heart, Bobby felt his house begin to sway, that is, move a little from side to side. A new fear drove everything else out of his head—the fear that his house might be going to fall! He couldn't believe that this could be so, and yet he had the feeling that it was so, and couldn't get rid of it. He had lived in that house a long, long time and never in all that long, long time had he once had such a feeling as now possessed him. Many a time had rough Brother North Wind used all his strength against that big chestnut-tree. Sometimes he had made it tremble ever so little, but that was all, and Bobby, curled up in his snug bed, had laughed at rough Brother North Wind. He just couldn't imagine anything really happening to his tree.

But something was happening now! There wasn't the smallest doubt about it. The great old tree shivered and shook with every blow. At last Bobby could stand it no longer. He just had to know what was happening, and what it all meant. With his teeth chattering with fright, he crawled up to his doorway and looked down. Badly frightened as he was, what he saw frightened him still more. It frightened him so that he let go his hold and tumbled down to his bed. Of course that didn't hurt him, because it was soft, and in a minute he was scrambling up to his doorway again.

"What shall I do? What can I do?" whimpered Bobby Coon as he looked down with frightened eyes. "I can't run and I can't stay. What can I do? What can I do?"

Bobby Coon was horribly frightened. There was no doubt about it, he was horribly frightened. Have you guessed what it was that he saw? Well, it was Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy chopping down the big chestnut-tree which had been Bobby's home for so long. And looking on was Bowser the Hound.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 3, "Bobby's Dreadful Fright")

STORY 1583. March 8, 1917

Bowser the Hound Discovers Someone at Home

Now that Bobby Coon knew what it was that had frightened him so, he felt no better than before. In fact, he felt worse. Before, he had imagined all sorts of dreadful things, but nothing that he had imagined was as bad as what he now knew to be a fact. His house, the big hollow chestnut-tree in which he had lived so long and in which he had gone to sleep so happily at the beginning of winter, was being cut down by Farmer Brown's boy and Farmer Brown himself, and Bowser the Hound was looking on. There was no other tree near enough to jump to. The only way out was down straight where those keen axes were at work and where Bowser sat watching. What chance was there for him? None. Not the least chance in the world. At least, that is the way Bobby felt about it. That was because he didn't know Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy.

You see, all this time that Bobby Coon had been having such a dreadful, such a very dreadful time, Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound had known nothing at all about it. Bobby Coon hadn't once entered the heads of any of them. None of them knew that the big chestnut-tree was Bobby's home. If Farmer Brown's boy had known it, I suspect that he would have found some good excuse for not cutting it. But he didn't, and so he had swung his axe with a will, for he wanted to show his father that he could do a man's work.

Why were they cutting down that big chestnut-tree? Well, you see that tree was practically dead, so Farmer Brown had decided that it could be of use in no way now save as wood for the fires at home. If it were cut down, the young trees springing up around it would have a better chance to grow. It would be better to cut it now than to allow it to stand, growing weaker all the time, until at last it should fall in some great storm and perhaps break down some of the young trees about it.

Now if Bobby Coon had known Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy as Tommy Tit the Chickadee knew them, and as Happy Jack Squirrel knew them, and as some others knew them, he would have climbed right straight down that tree without the teeniest, weeniest bit of fear of them. He would have known that he was perfectly safe. But he didn't know them, and so he felt both helpless and hopeless, and this is a very dreadful feeling indeed.

For a little while he peeped out of his doorway, watching the keen axes and the flying yellow chips. Then he crept miserably back to bed to wait for the worst. He just didn't know what else to do. By and by there was a dreadful crack, and another and another. Farmer Brown shouted. So did Farmer Brown's boy. Bowser the Hound

barked excitedly. Slowly the big tree began to lean over. Then it moved faster and faster, and Bobby Coon felt giddy and very sick. He felt very sick indeed. Then, with a frightful crash, the tree struck the ground, and for a few minutes Bobby didn't know anything at all.

No, sir, he didn't know a single thing. You see, when the tree hit the ground, Bobby was thrown against the side of his house so hard that all the wind was knocked from his body, and all his senses were knocked from his head. When after a little they returned to him, Bobby discovered that the tree had fallen in such a way that the hole which had been his doorway was partly closed. He was a prisoner in his own house.

He didn't mind this so much as you might expect. He began to hope ever so little. He began to hope that Farmer Brown and his boy wouldn't find that hollow and after a while they would go away. And then Bowser the Hound upset all hope. He came over to the fallen tree and began to sniff along the trunk. When he reached the partly closed hole which was Bobby's doorway, he began to whine and bark excitedly. He would stick his nose in as far as he could, sniff, then lift his head and bark. After that he would scratch frantically at the hole.

"Hello!" exclaimed Farmer Brown's boy, "Bowser has found someone at home! I wonder who it can be."

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 4, "Bowser Finds Someone at Home")

STORY 1584. March 9, 1917

Bobby Coon Shows Fight

Who for his home doth bravely fight
  Is doing what he knows is right.
A coward he, the world would say,
  Should he turn tail and run away.

Bobby Coon couldn't run away if he wanted to. I suspect that he would have run only too gladly had he had the least chance to. For there he was a prisoner in his own house, which had been cut down by Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy, which had fallen in such a way as to partly close Bobby's doorway. He couldn't get out if he wanted to, and he didn't want to just then because he knew by the sound of Bowser the Hound's deep-drawn sniffs at his doorway, followed by his eager barks, that Bowser had discovered that he, Bobby, was at home. He knew that Bowser couldn't get in, and so he was very well content to stay where he was.

Presently Bobby heard the voice of Farmer Brown's boy, and though Bobby didn't understand what Farmer Brown's boy said, his heart sank way down to his toes just the same. At least, that is the way it felt to Bobby. You see, he knew by the sound of that voice, even though he couldn't understand the words, that Farmer Brown's boy had understood Bowser, and now knew that there was someone at home in that hollow tree.

As to that Bobby was quite right. While Farmer Brown's boy couldn't understand

what Bowser was saying as he whined and yelped, he did understand perfectly what Bowser meant.

"Who is it, Bowser, old fellow? Is it a squirrel, or Whitefoot the Wood Mouse, or that sly old scamp, Unc' Billy Possum?" asked Farmer Brown's boy.

"Bow, wow, wow!" replied Bowser, dancing about between sniffs at Bobby's doorway.

"I don't know what that means, but I'm going to find out, Bowser," laughed Farmer Brown's boy, picking up his axe.

"Bow, wow! Bow, wow, wow, wow!" replied Bowser, more excited than ever.

First, Farmer Brown's boy had Farmer Brown bold Bowser away from the opening. Then with his axe he thumped all along the hollow part of the tree, hoping that this would frighten whoever was inside so that they would try to run out. But Bobby couldn't get out because, as you know, his doorway was partly closed, and he wouldn't have even if he could; he felt safer right where he was. So Farmer Brown's boy thumped in vain. When he found that this was useless, he drove the keen edge of his axe in right at the edge of the hole which was Bobby's doorway. Farmer Brown joined with his axe, and in a few minutes, they had slit out a long strip which reached clear to where Bobby was crouching and let the light pour in, so that he had to blink and for a minute or two had hard work to see at all.

Right away Bowser discovered him, and growling savagely, tried to get at him. But the opening wasn't wide enough for Bowser to get more than his nose in, and this Bobby promptly seized in his sharp teeth.

"Yow-w-w! Oh-o-o! Let go! Let go!" yelled Bowser.

"Gr-r-r-r-r!" growled Bobby, and tried to sink his teeth deeper. Bowser yelped and howled and shook his head and pulled as hard as ever he could, so that at last Bobby had to let go. Farmer Brown's boy hurried up to look in. What he saw was a mouthful of sharp teeth snapping at him. Bobby Coon might have been very much afraid, but he didn't show it. No, sir, he didn't show it. What he did show was that he meant to fight for his life, liberty, and home. He was very fierce looking, was Bobby Coon, as Farmer Brown's boy peeped in at him.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 5)

STORY 1585. March 10, 1917

Something is Wrong with Bobby Coon

Farmer Brown's boy chuckled as he peered in at Bobby Coon, and watched Bobby show his teeth, and listened to his snarls and growls. It was very plain that Bobby intended to fight for his life. It might be an entirely hopeless fight, but he would fight just the same.

"Bobby," said Farmer Brown's boy, "you certainly are a plucky little rascal. I know

just what you think; you think that my father and I cut this tree down just to get you, and you think that we and Bowser the Hound are going to try to kill you. You are all wrong, Bobby, all wrong. If we had known that this tree was your house, we wouldn't have cut it down. No, Sir, we wouldn't.

"And now that we have found out that it is, we are not going to harm so much as a hair of you. I'm going to cut this opening a little larger so that you can get out easily, and then I am going to hold on to Bowser and give you a chance to get away. I hope you know of some other hollow tree near here to which you can go. It's a shame, Bobby, that we didn't know about this. It certainly is, and I'm ever so sorry. Now you just quit your snarling and growling while I give you a chance to get out."

But Bobby didn't quit threatening to fight whoever came near. You see, he couldn't understand what Farmer Brown's boy said, which was too bad, because it would have lifted a great load from his mind. So he didn't have the least doubt that these were enemies and that they intended to kill him. He didn't believe he had the least chance in the world to escape, but he bravely intended to fight the very best he could, just the same. And this shows that Bobby possessed the right kind of a spirit. It shows that he wasn't a quitter.

Furthermore, there was something wrong with Bobby. Though no one knew it but himself, he had been badly hurt when that tree fell. The fact is, one of Bobby's legs had been broken. Yet in spite of this, he meant to fight. Yes, sir, in spite of a broken leg, he had no intention of giving up until he had to.

Farmer Brown's boy swung his axe a few times and split the opening in the hollow tree wider so that Bobby would have no trouble in getting out. All the time Bobby snapped and snarled and gritted his teeth. Then Farmer Brown's boy led Bowser the Hound off to one side and held him. Farmer Brown joined them, and then they waited. Bobby couldn't see them. It grew very still there in the Green Forest. Bobby didn't know just what to make of it. Could it be that he had frightened them away by his fierceness? After a while he began to think that this was so. He waited just as long as he could be patient and then poked his head out. No one was to be seen, for Farmer Brown and his boy and Bowser the Hound were hidden by a little clump of hemlock-trees.

Slowly and painfully Bobby climbed out. That broken leg hurt dreadfully. It was one of his front legs, and of course he had to hold that paw up. That meant that he had to walk on three legs. This was bad enough, but when he started to climb a tree, he couldn't. With a broken leg, there would be no more climbing for Bobby Coon. It was useless for him to look for another hollow tree. All he could do was to look for a hollow log into which he could crawl.

Poor Bobby Coon! What should he do? What could he do? For the first time his splendid courage deserted him. You see, he thought he was all alone there, and that no one saw him. So he just crouched right down there at the foot of the tree he had started to climb, and whimpered. He was frightened and very, very miserable, was Bobby Coon, and he was in great pain. Things were very wrong with Bobby Coon.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 6)

Illustrations. March 5 to March 10, 1917.

1580. Bobby Coon Has a Bad Dream
No sooner was he inside that hollow log than up came the great giant and began to beat on that hollow log with a great club.

1581. Bobby Coon Doesn't Know He's Awake
It gave him an awful sinking feeling inside.

1582. Bobby Coon Has a Horrible Fright
"What can I do?" whimpered Bobby Coon as he looked down.

1583. Bowser the Hound Discovers Someone at Home
"Hello!" exclaimed Farmer Brown's Boy. "Bowser has discovered someone at home."

1584. Bobby Coon Shows Fight
Then with his axe he thumped all along the hollow part of the tree.

1585. Something is Wrong with Bobby Coon
Slowly and painfully Bobby climbed out—that broken leg hurt dreadfully.

STORY 1586. March 12, 1917

Bobby Coon Has a Strange Journey

It's funny how you'll often find
That trouble's mostly in your mind.

It's a fact. More than three-fourths of the troubles that worry people are not real troubles at all. They are all in the mind. They are things that people are afraid are going to happen and worry about until they are sure they will happen—and then they do not happen at all. Very, very often things that seem bad turn out to be blessings. All of us do a great deal of worrying for nothing. I know I do. Bobby Coon did when he took his strange journey which I am going to tell you about.

Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy and Bowser the Hound had watched Bobby crawl out of his ruined house and start off to seek a new home. Of course, they had seen right away that something was wrong with Bobby, for he walked on three legs and held the fourth one up.

"The poor little chap," murmured Farmer Brown's boy pityingly. "That leg must have been hurt when the tree fell. I hope it isn't badly hurt. We'll wait a few minutes and see what he does."

So they waited in their hiding-place and watched Bobby. They saw him go to the foot of a tree as if to climb it. They saw him try and fail, because he couldn't climb with only three legs, and they saw him crouch down in a little whimpering heap. It was then that Farmer Brown's boy was sure that Bobby's hurt was really serious.

"We can't let that little fellow go to suffer and perhaps die," said Farmer Brown's boy, and ran forward while Farmer Brown held Bowser.

Bobby heard him coming and promptly faced about ready to fight bravely. When he got near enough, Farmer Brown's boy threw his coat over Bobby and then, in spite of Bobby's frantic struggles, gathered him up and wrapped the coat about him so that he could neither bite nor scratch. Bobby was quite helpless.

"I'm going to take him home, and when I've made him quite comfortable, I'll come back," cried Farmer Brown's boy.

"All right," replied Farmer Brown, with a kindly twinkle in his eyes.

So Farmer Brown's boy started for home, carrying Bobby as gently as he could. Of course Bobby couldn't see where he was being taken, because that coat was over his head, and of course he hadn't understood a word that Farmer Brown's boy had said. But Bobby could imagine all sorts of dreadful things, and he did. He was sure that when this journey ended the very worst that could happen would happen. He was quite hopeless, was Bobby Coon. He kept still because he had to. There was nothing else to do.

All the time he wondered where he was being taken. He was sure that never again would he see the Green Forest. His broken leg pained him dreadfully, but fear of what

would happen when this strange journey ended made him almost forget the pain. It was the first time in all his life that Bobby ever had journeyed anywhere save on his own four feet, and quite aside from his fear, it gave him a very queer feeling. He kept wishing it would end quickly, yet at the same time he didn't want it to end because of what he was sure would happen then.

So through the Green Forest, then through the Old Orchard, and finally across the barnyard to the barn Bobby Coon was carried. It was the strangest journey he ever had known, and it was the most terrible, though it needn't have been if only he could have known the truth.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 7)

STORY 1587. March 13, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Plays Doctor

No greater joy can one attain
Than helping ease another's pain.

Poor Bobby Coon! His broken leg pained him a great deal, of course. Broken legs and arms always do pain. They hurt dreadfully when they are broken, they hurt dreadfully after they are broken, and they hurt while they are mending. Among the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, a broken leg or arm is a great deal worse than it is with us humans. We know how to fix the break so that Mother Nature may mend it and make the leg or arm as good as ever. But with the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, nothing of this sort is possible, and very, very often a broken limb means an early death. You see, such a break will not mend properly, and the little sufferer becomes a cripple, and cripples cannot long escape their enemies.

So, though he didn't know it at the time, it was a very lucky thing for Bobby Coon that Farmer Brown's boy discovered that broken leg and wrapped him up in his coat and took him home. Bobby didn't think it was lucky. Oh, my, no! Bobby thought it was just the other way about. You see, he didn't know Farmer Brown's boy, except by sight. He didn't know of his gentleness and tender heart. All he knew of men and boys was that most of them seemed to delight in hunting him, in frightening him and trying to kill him. So all through that strange journey in the arms of Farmer Brown's boy, up to Farmer Brown's barn, Bobby was sure, absolutely sure, that he was being taken somewhere to be killed. He didn't have a doubt, not the least doubt, of it.

When they reached the barn, Farmer Brown's boy put Bobby down very gently, but fastened him in the coat so that he couldn't get out. Then he went to the house and presently returned with some neat strips of clean white cloth. Then he took out his knife and made very smooth two thin, flat sticks. When these suited him, he tied Bobby's hind legs together so that he couldn't kick with them. Then he placed Bobby on his side on a board and with a broad strip of cloth bound him to it on his side in such a way that Bobby couldn't move. All the time he talked to Bobby in the gentlest of voices and did

his best not to hurt him.

But Bobby couldn't understand, and to be wholly helpless, not to be able to kick or scratch or bite, was the most dreadful feeling he ever had known. He was sure that something worse was about to happen. You see, he didn't know anything about doctors, and so of course he couldn't know that Farmer Brown's boy was playing doctor. Very, very gently Farmer Brown's boy felt of the broken leg. He brought the broken parts together, and when he was sure that they just fitted, he bound them in place on one of the thin, smooth, flat sticks with one of the strips of clean white cloth. Then he put the other smooth flat stick above the break and wound the whole about with strips of cloth so tightly that there was no chance for those two sticks to slip. That was so that the two parts of the broken bone in the leg would be held just where they belonged until they could grow together.

When it was done to suit him, he covered the outside with something very, very bitter and bad tasting. This was to keep Bobby from trying to tear off the cloth with his teeth. You see, he knew that if that leg was to become as good as ever it was, it must stay just as he had bound it until Old Mother Nature could heal it.

So Farmer Brown's boy played doctor, and a very gentle and kindly doctor he was, for his heart was full of pity for poor Bobby Coon.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 8)

STORY 1588. March 14, 1917

Bobby Coon is Made Much Of

There's nothing like a stomach full
To make the world seem brighter;
To banish worry, drive out fear,
And make the heart feel lighter.

While Farmer Brown's boy was playing doctor and doing his best to fix Bobby Coon's broken leg so that it would heal and be as good as ever, poor Bobby was wholly in despair, and nothing is more dreadful than to be wholly in despair. There he was, perfectly helpless, for Farmer Brown's boy had bound him so that he couldn't move. You see, Bobby couldn't understand what it all meant. If he could have understood Farmer Brown's boy, it would have been very different. But he couldn't, and so his mind was all the time full of dreadful fear.

When Farmer Brown's boy had bound that broken leg so that it would be held firmly in place to heal, he made a comfortable bed in a deep box out of which Bobby couldn't possibly climb with that broken leg and in this he put Bobby very gently, after taking off the bands with which he had been bound to the board while the broken leg was being fixed. Then he went to the house and presently returned with more good things to eat than Bobby had seen since cold weather began. These he put in the box with Bobby, and then left him alone.

Now at first Bobby made up his mind that he wouldn't taste so much as a crumb. He would starve rather than live a prisoner, which was what he felt himself to be. But his stomach was empty, the smell of those good things tickled his nose, and in spite of himself he began to nibble. The first thing he knew he had filled his stomach, the first good meal he had had for many weeks, because, you know, he had been asleep most of the winter.

Right away Bobby felt sleepy. A full stomach, you know, almost always makes one feel sleepy. Then, too, Bobby was quite tired out with the fright and strange experience he had been through. So he curled up, and in no time at all he had forgotten all his troubles. And for days and days Bobby slept most of the time. You see, he was finishing out that long winter sleep he was used to. And this, it happens, was the very best thing in the world for Bobby. Being asleep, he wasn't tempted to try to pull off that bandage around the broken leg, and so the leg, had just the chance it needed to mend.

Every day Farmer Brown's boy visited Bobby, just as a good doctor should visit a patient, and looked carefully at the bandaged leg to make sure that it was as it should be. And whenever Farmer Brown's boy visited Bobby, he took some goody in his pocket to tempt Bobby's appetite, just as if it needed tempting! Bobby would wake up long enough to eat what had been brought and then would go to sleep again, quite as if he were all alone.

As the weather grew warmer, Bobby grew more wakeful. Of course, he had plenty of time in which to remember and to think. He remembered how dreadfully frightened he had been when Farmer Brown's boy had caught him and brought him to the barn, all because he had not really known Farmer Brown's boy.

Now everything was different, so very, very different. It was a fact, an actual fact, that Bobby had learned to know the step of Farmer Brown's boy, and when he heard it coming his way, he was as tickled as once he would have been frightened. You see, Farmer Brown's boy was very, very good to him and made so much of him that I am afraid he was quite spoiling Bobby. Kindness had driven out fear from Bobby's mind, and in its place had come trust. It will do it every time, if given a chance.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 9)

STORY 1589[8]. March 15, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy and Bobby Celebrate

If when Bobby Coon was living in the Green Forest, anybody had told him that there would come a day when he and Farmer Brown's boy would have a celebration together, Bobby would have said that it was the craziest idea ever thought of. In those days he hated Farmer Brown's boy because he feared him. Did you ever notice how fear most always makes hate? Almost everybody, big and little, is inclined to hate whatever or whoever is feared. So Bobby Coon, being afraid of Farmer Brown's boy, simply because he was a human being, the same kind of a creature as the hunter who had so often tried to kill Bobby, had hated him. And now here they were in Farmer

8 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

Brown's barn actually going to have a celebration together.

What were they going to celebrate? Can't you guess? They were going to celebrate the taking off of that bandage from the leg which had been broken. Yes, sir, that is just what they were going to celebrate. You see it was a great event, and it is usual to celebrate great events. At least that is what Farmer Brown's boy told Bobby, although Bobby didn't understand a word he said. So Farmer Brown's boy had brought along an extra supply of good things to eat, for what kind of a celebration can anyone have without a feast?

First he fed Bobby some of the good things out of his hand. Then he took out his knife and very carefully began to cut the strings that held the bandage in place. When those wore off, he unwound the strips of cloth that had held in place the two little thin flat sticks which had held that broken leg so firmly that the broken ends had had no chance to slip apart.

"Now we'll see how good a doctor I am," said Farmer Brown's boy as the last strip of cloth was unwound and the two little sticks dropped to the floor. Very gently he felt of the poor little leg where the break had been. Bobby looked on wonderingly. He didn't feel those gentle fingers at all, because his leg had been bound up so long that there was no feeling in it. A look of pleasure and happiness came into Farmer Brown's boy's eyes as his fingers worked back and forth along that little leg.

"It's all right. It's a good job, Bobby," said he. "Old Mother Nature has done her part and that leg is going to be just as good as ever after you've used it awhile. You'll soon be able to run about and climb just as if nothing had happened. Then I suppose you'll be off for the Green Forest and forget all about me. Now we'll celebrate by going up to the house and letting you exercise a little."

He gathered Bobby up in his arms and took him to the house where he put him down on the kitchen floor. "Here, mother," said he to Mrs. Brown, "is our little patient. We're going to celebrate by letting him stay here awhile and get acquainted with us. Isn't he handsome?" Bobby gravely looked Mrs. Brown all over and made up his mind that there was nothing to fear from her. No one with such a sweet, gentle face could possibly do him any harm. Then, having a very lively curiosity, he started to explore this queer place where human beings lived. It was the first time Bobby had had a chance to move about since his leg was broken, and because he hadn't used them for so long his good legs felt rather funny. As for the leg that had been broken, it felt as if there wasn't any leg there at all, and he held it up stiffly as he went about on three legs examining with eyes and nose everything he could reach.

All this time Farmer Brown's boy and his mother watched Bobby and wished they could know just what was going on inside of Bobby's head, and what he thought of all the strange things he was seeing for the first time. In the pleasure of watching him they quite forgot that they had anything else to do. Presently Bobby sat down by the pantry door and sniffed and sniffed, and then rolled his eyes up at Mrs Brown in the funniest way.

"Bless his heart, he's hungry!" she exclaimed.

"I don't see how he can be," chuckled Farmer Brown's boy, "but I am."

In no time at all Mrs. Brown was out of the pantry with a plate of scraps of meat and other tidbits for Bobby and a big piece of pie for Farmer Brown's boy. So altogether they had quite a celebration.

STORY 1590[9]. March 16, 1917

Black Pussy Loses Her Bed

Bobby Coon had decided that he liked Farmer Brown's kitchen. It was a very warm and comfortable place, and it was filled with pleasant smells that tickled his nose every time he drew a breath. What some of those pleasant smells came from he had just found out from the good things Mrs. Brown had given him to eat. His box in the barn where he had stayed while his broken leg was getting well was very comfortable, very comfortable indeed, but out there there were no such delicious smells.

"I think I'll stay right here," thought Bobby, as on three legs he explored that kitchen and examined everything in it. Now that his stomach was so full that it was really uncomfortable, he began to feel sleepy. Besides, he was growing tired. You know he had not used his legs for some time, and then, too, he wasn't used to walking on three legs, and he couldn't yet use that leg which had been broken. There was no feeling or strength in it.

Presently back of the kitchen stove he found a box, and in that box a bed. It was a very nice, comfortable looking bed. Bobby's nose told him that someone else was in the habit of sleeping in it, but that troubled him not at all.

"This looks good to me," said Bobby to himself. "I don't know who it belongs to, and I don't much care. If they are big enough to turn me out of it, which I very much doubt, all right. Until they do this bed is going to be mine."

He deliberately crawled into Black Pussy's box and began to rearrange Black Pussy's bed to suit himself. He is a little fussy, is Bobby Coon, and he wants things just so. When he had fixed the bed to suit him, he curled himself up, blinked sleepily at Farmer Brown's boy, as much as to say, "This suits me, thank you," and in two minutes was asleep.

Farmer Brown's boy, who had been watching him, laughed. "Well, what do you think of that?" said he to his mother. "The rascal is making himself at home here as if he intended to stay. I suppose I ought to take him back to the barn, but he looks so comfortable I hate to disturb him."

"Leave him right where he is," said Mrs. Brown, quite as if that settled the matter. "I guess Black Pussy can get along without her bed for a while."

"I wonder what she'll say when she finds out who is in it," chuckled Farmer Brown's boy. "I hope I'm around when she does. I believe I'll call her."

He went to the door and called and called, but Black Pussy did not appear. The

9 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

truth is she was watching for Danny Meadow Mouse out in the barn[10], sure that this time she would catch him. All the time Danny was watching her and laughing to himself. Black Pussy would have to have more patience than she ever had had in order to catch him, But Black Pussy didn't know this, and though she heard Farmer Brown's boy calling her she paid no attention.

It was a long, long time after this that she gave up her watch for Danny, disappointed but very sure that she would catch him the next day. On her way through the barn, she passed the box where Bobby Coon had been while his leg was healing. Of course she had discovered Bobby there long before, and she had taken great pains to keep away from that box. She didn't approve of Bobby at all, and she had a great deal of respect for his size and his teeth and claws.

Now as she started to go around the box she noticed that it had been moved a little and something whispered to her that it was empty. Black Pussy paused and stared very hard at the box. Then, very softly she crept upon another box from which she could look into Bobby's box. It was empty.

"He's gone, and I'm glad of it," muttered Black Pussy, twitching the end of her tail. "These people from the Green Forest should stay where they belong. Ever since that miserable coon came here Farmer Brown's boy has hardly noticed me. Now perhaps I'll get a little attention."

With this Black Pussy jumped down and went to the house. The door was opened just then and she walked into the kitchen. It struck her right away that there was something queer there. She didn't know just what it was, but she had that feeling.

STORY 1591[11]. March 17, 1917

Black Pussy Loses her Temper

Who loses his temper will find to his cost
That with it his good common sense is lost.

You never find a hot temper and cool sense together in the same person. Those are two things that don't mix. And when you see two people quarreling you may depend upon it that the one who doesn't let his temper get the best of him is the one who will have the best of the quarrel.

When Black Pussy walked into Farmer Brown's kitchen she hadn't the least suspicion that there was anything unusual there until she was well inside, Then it suddenly struck her that there was something queer there. Everything looked just as usual, but she just felt that it wasn't.

For one thing Farmer Brown's boy and Mrs. Brown seemed to be watching her as if they expected something to happen. It gave her an uncomfortable feeling and made her uneasy. It made her twitch the end of her tail more than usual. She went to her saucer of milk and lapped a little, but that feeling something wasn't just right took

10 STORY 1514, 1916.

11 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

away her appetite.

She carefully washed her face, for Black Pussy is very neat, and then decided that she would go to her bed and think the matter over. So she yawned and stretched and then in a very dignified sort of way she walked over to her box behind the stove. She put her two front paws on the edge of the box and looked in just as she always did. For just a little wee second she couldn't believe her own eyes. There was someone in her bed! Yes, sir, someone had dared to curl up in her bed!

Now Black Pussy's first thought was that a strange cat had been admitted to Farmer Brown's kitchen and had taken possession of her bed. Such a thing had happened before, and it was a thing that no self-respecting cat could allow. Right away Black Pussy lost her temper. She has a way of losing it very easily. It is one of Black Pussy's worst faults. Because of it she has got into trouble many times when she might have avoided it. It usually is this way with people who lose their tempers easily.

Black Pussy wasn't afraid, No, indeed. She never yet had met a strange cat of whom she was afraid. She simply was very, very angry. She would teach this stranger a lesson. She wouldn't even stop to inquire what had brought the stranger there. Every hair on Black Pussy's tail stood on end, which made that tail look three times as big as it really is, a sure sign that she had lost her temper. A fierce glare crept into her yellow eyes, and like, a flash she reached in and struck with one paw on which every sharp claw was out to scratch and tear. At the same time, she spit as only Black Pussy can when she is angry. She had quite lost her temper. There was no doubt about that.

And then something happened. There was a snarling growl from inside that box and a grayish white face with black patches on the cheeks and lips drawn back to show the sharpest teeth was suddenly lifted, and a pair of angry eyes glared into her own. No cat ever had a face like that!

"Yow!" yelled Black Pussy and jumped back SO suddenly that she bumped into the stove, which added to her fright. She scrambled out and rushed to the closed door, and there she turned, her back arched, her tail swollen, trying to appear very brave, but with a look of fear in her eyes as she watched Bobby Coon slowly crawl out of her box, her box, mind you, and right in her own home!

STORY 1592[12]. March 19, 1917

Black Pussy Upsets Things

To be awakened from a nap by having a lot of sharp claws stuck into you would not be exactly pleasant, I think you will admit. Yet this is just what happened to Bobby Coon when Black Pussy discovered him asleep in her bed behind Farmer Brown's kitchen stove. Those claws didn't hurt much because Bobby's coat was so thick that they only got through far enough to prick the skin. But that was enough to bring him out of that box all ready to fight in spite of the fact that one leg was useless. Bobby is no coward. Besides, when those sharp claws pricked his skin, they pricked his temper too. He didn't know who had dared treat him that way and he didn't much care.

12 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

Illustrations. March 12 to March 17, 1917.

1586. Bobby Coon Has a Strange Journey
So Farmer Brown's Boy started for home carrying Bobby as gentle as he could.

1587. Farmer Brown's Boy Plays Doctor
Then he placed Bobby on his side on a board and with a broad strip of cloth bound him to it.

1588. Bobby Coon is Made Much Of
The first thing he knew he had filled his stomach—the first good meal he had had for many weeks.

1589. Farmer Brown's Boy and Bobby Celebrate
"Now we'll see how good a doctor I am," said Farmer Brown's Boy.

1590. Black Pussy Loses Her Bed
He is a little fussy is Bobby Coon and he wants things just so.
e.

1591. Black Pussy Loses her Temper
She put her two front paws on the edge of the box and looked in, just as she always did.

When he saw how badly scared Black Pussy was when she found out who it was she had so rashly scratched, saw her bump into the stove in her haste to get away, and then scamper for the door Bobby chuckled down inside. He knew then that Black Pussy was more afraid of him than he could possibly be of her. He had seen Black Pussy hunting In the Green Forest, and like all the other little people he had felt that she had no business there. But there she had never given him a chance to teach her a lesson. Now he had got a chance, and the idea tickled him. He didn't once consider that now things were just the other way around and that Black Pussy was where she had a perfect right to be, while he himself was a visitor. People are apt to forget such things.

So Bobby climbed out of that box, and making that growl of his as ugly sounding as he could be, marched straight toward Black Pussy. Now Black Pussy was not a coward. More than once, she had faced a dog bigger than herself and had made him turn tail. She knew just how to treat a dog. But this stranger she knew nothing at all about. There was something about the slow, deliberate way in which he came toward her that was very businesslike and filled her with fear. She arched her back and swelled her tail and growled and spat like a black fury, but this growling stranger came right on.

"Yow-w-w! I'll scratch your eyes out!" threatened Black Pussy. "You've no right here! That's my bed, and if you know what is best for yourself, you'll leave it alone!"

"We'll see about that," growled Bobby. "That bed may have been yours once, but it's mine now. At least until you can take it away from me. Where I come from, we take what we want, and, if we have to, we fight to keep it. I like that bed. It's a very nice bed. It's a very comfortable place—the most comfortable place I've been in for a long time. It's such a very nice bed and such a very comfortable place that I'm quite ready to fight for it, even if I haven't but three good legs. You're just a big, black bluffer. That's what you are—a big, black bluffer. Come on and fight."

This was too much for Black Pussy. This big, queer-looking stranger was altogether too willing. Never in her life had she wanted anything quite so much as she did to have that door opened for her to get out. But Farmer Brown's boy didn't open the door. Black Pussy took one more look at Bobby Coon and then the last bit of courage left her. With a yowl of fear and anger she rushed past Bobby and jumped—where do you think? Right up on the table! Yes, sir, right up on the table!

Over went a pitcher of milk! Off fell a cup and broke on the floor with a crash! A plate followed it! Mrs. Brown screamed and rushed forward to save the rest of the dishes, but Black Pussy was such a crazy looking object of rage and fear that Mrs. Brown didn't dare touch her. Black Pussy was growling and spitting, a perfect fury of a cat. Bobby Coon turned, and in his slow business-like way came toward the table, Black Pussy jumped about, upsetting more dishes. Then Farmer Brown's boy opened the kitchen door and picked up Bobby Coon. Black Pussy made a flying leap and shot out of the door like a black streak.

"Phew!" exclaimed Farmer Brown's boy. "I thought something might happen when they met."

"I hope you are satisfied," said Mrs. Brown grimly, as she began to straighten up

the things on the table. Then she began to laugh and Farmer Brown's boy laughed, too. It really had been very funny. As for Bobby Coon, he was laughing, also, as he marched straight back to Black Pussy's bed just as if nothing had happened.

STORY 1593[13]. March 20, 1917

Black Pussy Grows Thin

Black Pussy was growing thin. There was no doubt about it. And it was all on account of Bobby Coon. You see Bobby had made himself very much at home in the kitchen of Farmer Brown's house. Farmer Brown's boy hadn't intended to keep him there more than a day or so, but Bobby had promptly taken possession and made himself so much at home and was so well behaved and altogether such a funny fellow that Mrs. Brown said to let him stay, and this Farmer Brown's boy was only too glad to do.

You see Bobby is smart. He knew when he was well off. He knew that where there were such delicious smells there must be equally delicious things to eat. He liked those delicious smells. He liked that comfortable bed of Black Pussy's in the box behind the stove. He knew that if he should go back to the Green Forest now, he would have to hunt for a new home, and at this particular time of year he would have to do a great deal of hunting to get enough to eat.

He had learned that there was nothing to fear from Farmer Brown or Mrs. Brown or Farmer Brown's boy. In fact, there was a great deal to be gained from them. So Bobby was quite contented to stay right there.

Now this didn't suit Black Pussy at all. Bobby had given her a terrible fright when she had first discovered him in her box. For two days thereafter she couldn't be coaxed near the house. When at last she did get courage enough to steal up to the doorstep for her food, she gulped it down as fast as ever she could and then went back to the barn.

As Bobby began to get back the use of that paw which had been broken, he became very inquisitive. You know one who is inquisitive is one who pokes his nose into everything and tries to find out about everything. Inquisitive people are sure to get into mischief, and it was so with Bobby Coon. So Farmer Brown's boy put a neat collar around Bobby's neck and with a long, lift chain fastened Bobby just outside the kitchen door where the sun lay bright and warm. At night Bobby was taken back into the kitchen.

Now there is an imp of mischief in Bobby Coon. There certainly is. He had no hard feelings against Black Pussy. Certainly not. Why should he have? But he had discovered that Black Pussy was afraid of him, and out of pure mischief of nothing else he started in to make life miserable for her. The first morning he was fastened outside he discovered her plate on the doorstep. It was just a little beyond his reach as he soon discovered. Bobby promptly curled up in the sun and appeared to take a nap. Presently Black Pussy came stealing up for her breakfast. When she saw Bobby, she stopped. At a safe distance she sat down and watched him. She was very hungry, very hungry

13 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

indeed. At last, sure that Bobby was asleep, she began to creep toward that plate of food. Inch by inch she crept up to it without making a sound. She was just reaching for the first mouthful when Bobby Jumped to his feet, and growling fiercely, although inside he was chuckling, walked toward her. Black Pussy jumped back, spitting and snarling, then darted around the corner of the house with her tail three times as big as it should have been. Bobby Coon grinned and then went back and once more curled up in the sun.

Time after time Black Pussy tried to steal up and get that breakfast, but always just as she was reaching for the first mouthful Bobby seemed to wake up and Black Pussy ran. Finally she gave up even trying and went off down on the Green Meadows to hunt for meadow mice. Life had grown very uncomfortable for Black Pussy. It was bad enough to be driven out of her bed, but now she must go hungry, all on account of this stranger from the Green Forest. How she hated him. For the first time in her life Black Pussy knew what it means to go hungry and be in fear. She was learning something of how she had many, many times made the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest feel when she hunted them. I suspect that they would have been glad of it had they known.

And so Black Pussy grew thin while Bobby Coon grew fat, and for quite a while Farmer Brown's boy didn't discover what was going on.

STORY 1594. March 21, 1917

Bobby Begins to Long for the Green Forest

The one thing most to be desired
By everyone, both great and small,
More precious than all else we know of,
Is simple freedom, that is all.

Now though Bobby Coon was made a great deal of by Farmer Brown's boy and was petted and stuffed with good things to eat until it was a wonder that he wasn't made sick, he was really a prisoner. Excepting when Farmer Brown's boy played with him in the house, he was fastened by a long chain. You see, when Farmer Brown's boy brought Bobby home with a broken leg it was necessary to make a prisoner of him in order to give that leg a chance to heal. And when at last the bandage was taken off, and the leg was found to have healed, Bobby was kept a prisoner that he might get the full use of that leg once more before having to shift for himself. Day by day the strength came back to that leg until it was as good as ever it had been, and still Bobby was kept a prisoner. The truth is Farmer Brown's boy had grown so fond of Bobby that he couldn't bear to think of parting with him.

At first, Bobby hadn't minded in the least being a prisoner. It was fine to have all the good things to eat he wanted without the trouble of hunting for them, things he never had had before and never could have in the Green Forest.

It was fine to have a warm comfortable bed and not a thing in the world to worry

about. So for a time Bobby was quite content to be a prisoner. He didn't mind that chain at all, excepting when he wanted to poke his inquisitive little nose into something he couldn't reach.

But as sweet Mistress Spring awakened those who had slept the long winter away—the trees and flowers and insects, and Old Mr. Toad and Johnny Chuck and Striped Chipmunk and all the rest—and as one after another the birds arrived from the sunny Southland, and Bobby heard them singing and twittering, and watched them flying about, a great longing for the Green Forest crept into his heart.

At first, he didn't really know what it was that he wanted. It simply made him uneasy. He couldn't keep still. He walked back and forth, back and forth, at the length of his chain. He began to lose his appetite. Then one day Farmer Brown's boy brought him a fish for his dinner, and all in a flash Bobby knew what it was he wanted. He wanted to go back to the Green Forest. He wanted to fish for himself in the Laughing Brook. He wanted to climb trees. He wanted to visit his old neighbors and see what they were doing. He wanted to hunt for bugs under old logs and around old stumps. He wanted to hunt for nests being built, so that later he might steal the eggs from them. Yes, he did just this, I am sorry to say. Bobby is very fond of eggs, and he considers that he has a perfect right to them if he is smart enough to find them. He wanted to be free—free to do what he pleased when he pleased and how he pleased. He wanted to go back home to the Green Forest.

"Farmer Brown's boy has been very good to me, and I believe he would let me go if only I could tell him what I want," thought Bobby, "but I can't make him understand what I say any more than I can understand what he says. What a great pity it is that we don't all speak the same language. Then we would all understand each other, and I don't believe we little folks of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows would be hunted so much by these men creatures. There's nothing like common speech to make folks understand one another. I know Farmer Brown's boy would let me go if he only knew; I know he would."

Bobby sat down where he could look over towards the Green Forest and sighed and sighed, and all the longing of his heart crept into his eyes.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 10, "Bobby Longs for the Green Forest")

STORY 1595. March 22, 1917

The Happiest Coon Ever

As jolly Mr. Sun smiles down
And makes the land all bright and fair
So happiness within the heart
Spreads joy and brightness everywhere.

Now though Bobby Coon couldn't speak the language of Farmer Brown's boy and so tell him how he longed to be free and go back to the Green Forest, he could and he did tell him in another way just what was in his heart. He told him with his eyes,

though he didn't know it. You know eyes are sometimes called the windows of the soul. This means simply that as you look out through your eyes and see all that is going on about you, so others may sometimes look right in your eyes and see what is going on within your mind. Eyes are very wonderful things, and a great deal may be learned from them. Eyes will tell the truth when a tongue is busy telling a wrong story. I guess you know how hard it is when you have done wrong to look mother straight in the face and try to make her believe that you haven't done wrong. That is because your eyes are truthful.

Looking straight into the eyes of fierce wild animals often will fill them with fear. Trainers of lions and other dangerous animals know this and use it a great deal. Fear will show in the eyes when it shows nowhere else. It is the same with happiness and contentment. So it is with sorrow and worry. Just as a thermometer shows just how warm it is or how cold it is, so the eyes show our feelings.

When Bobby Coon sat down and gazed towards the Green Forest and wished that he could tell Farmer Brown's boy how he wanted to go back there, a look of longing grew and grew in Bobby's eyes, and Farmer Brown's boy saw it. What is more, he understood it. His own eyes grew soft.

"You poor little rascal," said he, "I believe you think you are a prisoner and that you want to go back home. Well, I guess there is no reason why you shouldn't now. I'm very fond of you, Bobby. Yes, I am. I'm so fond of you that I hate to have you go, and I guess that I've kept you longer than was necessary. That leg of yours looks to me to be as good as ever, so I really haven't an excuse for keeping you any longer. I think we'll take a walk this afternoon."

If Bobby could have understood what Farmer Brown's boy was saying, it would have made him feel a great deal better. But he didn't understand, and so he continued to stare towards the Green Forest and grow more and more homesick.

After dinner, Farmer Brown's boy came out and took off the collar and took Bobby in his arms. This time Bobby didn't have his eyes covered as he did when he had been brought from the Green Forest. Fear no longer made him want to bite and scratch. Through the Old Orchard straight to the Green Forest they went, and Bobby began to grow excited. What was going to happen? What did it mean?

Through the Green Forest straight to the place where Bobby's great hollow tree used to stand went Farmer Brown's boy. When they got there, he smoothed Bobby's coat and patted him gently. Then he put him down on the ground.

"Here we are, Bobby," said he. "Now run along and find a new house and be happy. I hope you won't forget me, because I am going to come over often to see you. Just keep out of mischief, and above all keep out of the way of hunters next fall. They shall not hunt here if I can help it, but you know I cannot watch all the time. Good-by, Bobby, and take care of yourself."

Bobby didn't say good-by, because he didn't know how. But a great joy came into his eyes, and Farmer Brown's boy saw it and understood. Straight off among the trees Bobby walked. Once he looked back. Farmer Brown's boy was watching him and

waved a hand.

"He was good to me. He certainly was good to me," thought Bobby. "I—I believe I really am very fond of him."

Then he went on to look for a new house. All the joy of the springtime was in his heart He was free! He was home once more in the Green Forest! He no longer feared Farmer Brown's boy!

"I'm the happiest coon in all the world!" cried Bobby.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 11)

STORY 1596. March 23, 1917

Bobby Coon Tries the Wrong House

"Home again! Home again! Happy am I!
Had I but wings I most surely would fly!"

So sang Bobby Coon as he wandered about in the Green Forest after leaving Farmer Brown's boy. At least, he meant it for singing. Of course, it wasn't real singing, for Bobby Coon can no more sing than he can fly. But it did very well to express his happiness, and that was all it was intended to do. Bobby was happy. He was very happy indeed. Indeed, he couldn't remember ever having been quite so happy. You see, he never before had understood fully what freedom means. No one can fully understand what a wonderful and blessed thing freedom is until they have lost it and then got it again.

Bobby took long breaths and sniffed and sniffed and sniffed and sniffed the sweet smells of early spring. The Green Forest was full of them and never had they seemed so good to Bobby. He climbed a tree for nothing under the sun but to know what it felt like to climb once more. Then he climbed down to earth again and went poking around among the leaves just for the fun of poking around. He rolled over and over from sheer joy. Finally he brushed himself off, climbed up on an old stump, and sat down to think things over.

"Of course," said he to himself, "the first thing for me to do is to find a new house. I don't have to have it right away, because there are plenty of places in which I can curl up for a nap, but it is more convenient and much more respectable to have a house. People who sleep anywhere and have no homes are never thought much of by their friends and neighbors. Without a home I can have no self-respect. There's a certain old hollow tree I always did like the looks of. Unc' Billy Possum used to live there, but maybe he has moved. Anyway, he may be out, and if so he will be smarter than I think he is to get me out once I'm inside. I believe I'll look up that tree right away."

Bobby scrambled down from the stump and started down the Lone Little Path. After a while he turned off the Lone Little Path into a hollow and presently came to the tree he had in mind. It was straight, tall, and big. High up was a doorway plenty big enough for Bobby Coon. He sat down and looked up. The longer he looked, the better

that tree seemed to him. It would suit for a house first-rate. There were marks on the tree made by claws—the claws of Unc' Billy Possum. Some of them looked quite fresh.

"Looks as if Unc' Billy is still living here," thought Bobby. "Well, I can't help it if he is. If that tree looks as good inside as it does outside, I am afraid Unc' Billy and I will have a falling out. It's everyone for himself in the Green Forest, and I don't think Unc' Billy will care to fight me. I'm bigger and considerably stronger than he, so if he's there, I guess I'll just invite him to move out."

Now, of course, this wasn't at all right of Bobby Coon, but it is the way things are done in the Green Forest, and the people who live there are used to it. The strong take what they want if they can get it, and Bobby knew that Unc' Billy Possum would treat Happy Jack Squirrel the same way, if he happened to want Happy Jack's house. So he climbed up the tree, quite sure that this was the house he would take for his new home. He was half-way up when a sharp voice spoke.

"Haven't you made a mistake, Brer Coon?" said the voice. "This isn't your house."

Bobby stopped and looked up. Unc' Billy Possum was grinning down at him from his doorway. Bobby grinned back. "It occurred to me that you might like to move, and as I'm looking for a house, I think this one will suit me very well," said he, and grinned again, for he knew that Unc' Billy would understand just what he meant.

Before Unc' Billy could say a word another sharp face appeared beside his and a voice still sharper than his own said: "What's that no 'count coon doing in our tree? What's this talk Ah hear about moving? Isn't anybody going to move that Ah knows of."

Bobby had forgotten all about old Mrs. Possum and now as he saw that it was two against one, he suddenly changed his mind.

"Excuse me," he said, "I guess I've got the wrong house."

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 12)

STORY 1597[14]. March 24, 1917

A House That Wasn't

Bobby Coon was quite upset. He had been so sure that that house of Unc' Billy Possum's was going to be HIS house that it upset him a whole lot to find that he had been mistaken and that he had got to look somewhere else for a house. It made him angry. Disappointment is very apt to lead to anger. So Bobby Coon was angry. He thought he was angry with Unc' Billy Possum, but really he was angry with himself for being so stupid as to forget all about old Mrs. Possum. If he had remembered her in the first place he wouldn't have dreamed of trying to take that house for himself. Two against one was one too many.

But Bobby didn't let his anger show. As he looked up at the sharp faces of Unc' Billy and old Mrs. Possum grinning down at him he grinned back and was full of

14 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

apologies, pretending that his coming there was all a mistake. He begged to be excused, saying that he had got the wrong house.

"Yo' cert'nly have," snapped old Mrs. Possum. "Must be that yo' haven't wholly waked up from your Winter sleep to make such a mistake as this, Mistah Coon. Don't do it again, because Ah reckon it might lead to a li'l unpleasantness, and we-uns don't want anything like that to happen."

Bobby said that that was the last thing in the world that he wanted and kept on apologizing as he backed down the tree. He kept saying over and over that it was all a mistake, a very great mistake, but he didn't let on that the real mistake was forgetting about old Mrs. Possum.

"What fo' yo' looking for a new house, Brer Coon?" asked Unc' Billy as Bobby reached the ground. "Ah thought yo' had a very comfortable home in the big hollow chestnut tree."

"So I did. So I did," replied Bobby. "I guess you must have overslept this Spring if you don't know what has been going on, Unc' Billy. Farmer Brown has cut that tree down. I hope he won't take it into his head to do the same thing as to yours."

With this Bobby started off chuckling o himself. You see he knew that that last remark would be very likely to set Unc' Billy and old Mrs. Possum to worrying, and it gave him a feeling of getting even with them, a feeling for which he had no real cause, as you and I know. As soon as he was out of sight of Unc' Billy and old Mrs. Possum, he sat down to think what he should do next. He thought over all the hollow trees he knew of. One was too small. Another was too near the edge of the Green Forest. A third had a long crack in it which let in too much wind. At last he remembered one up on the hill above where his old home used to be. He knew all about that house. He had looked into it more than once. It was almost as good as his old home.

"Why didn't I think of that before?" muttered Bobby. "If I had I wouldn't have made such a silly mistake as to give Unc' Billy Possum a chance to laugh at me, as I know the old sinner is doing this very minute."

So Bobby started for the hill above the place where his old home used to be, and as he went all his good spirits returned to him. He didn't hurry. There was no need. That house wouldn't run away, and he couldn't think of any one likely to have taken possession of it. So he took his time, poking about among the leaves on the ground, sniffing the sweet Spring odors and quite satisfied with himself and the world in general.

So at last he came to the place where that old house had stood as long as he could remember. Then very abruptly Bobby sat down and rubbed his eyes. Where was that old tree? Everything else looked just as he remembered it but there was no old hollow tree! Where it had stood was a stump with a lot of yellow chips scattered about. Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy had cut down that tree, too! Bobby Coon felt as if his little world was turned quite upside down.

STORY 1598[15]. March 26, 1917

Bobby Coon Goes Fishing

When you are troubled in your mind,
When worry you would put behind—
    Go fishing.
When you're at loss just what to do,
When something sorely puzzles you—
    Go fishing.

Bobby Coon learned that when he was very small. After a scolding by his mother and he felt wholly out of sorts he would go fishing and speedily forget all about his troubles. You know it is of no use to try to think of more than one thing at a time, and you can't be thinking of the fish you hope to catch and of your troubles, too. If you try to you won't catch any fish. So one of the best cures I know of for worms and troubles is just to go fishing.

When Bobby Coon at last got his wits together enough to understand what had become of that hollow tree he had counted on for his future home he was for a few minutes quite upset and more than a little downhearted. Now that he couldn't have that particular tree because, you know, it had been cut down, Bobby felt that somehow he had been cheated. He quite forgot that he had not remembered that tree at all until after he had found that he couldn't make Unc' Billy Possum move out of his home for him. Instead it seemed to him that he had always intended to make his home in that vanished tree some time. Now when he wanted there was no tree and so he felt that he had been cheated. It was a very very foolish feeling to have. It was simply because he was so disappointed. You know disappointed people often have foolish feelings and say and foolish things.

Grumbling to himself, Bobby tried to make up his mind what to do next. Right in the midst of his grumbling his ears caught a sound. It was very faint but there was no mistaking it. It was the voice of the Laughing Brook. Bobby's face cleared.

"I know what I'll do," said he. "I'll go fishing. There isn't any real need of finding a new home right away. It I had it I wouldn't stay in it tonight, anyway. It is going to be too fine a night to stay in—just the kind of a night to go fishing. I wonder if I'll see Billy Mink or Little Joe Otter. It's a long time since I've seen them.

Off Bobby started for the Laughing Brook, all his troubles forgotten in the thought of the fun he would have, for he dearly loved to fish and to paddle his hands in the water. He is fond of playing around water as any small boy. So it was that when Mistress Moon looked down that night to see what was going on in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows she discovered Bobby Coon fishing in the Laughing Brook and as carefree and happy as if he never had had a worry or trouble in his life. He hid among the Black Shadows beside a tiny little pool and watched for a careless minnow to come within reach. Then there would be a swift movement of a little black paw.

15 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

Illustrations. March 19 to March 24, 1917.

1592. Black Pussy Upsets Things
"Yow-w-w! I'll scratch your eyes out," threatened Black Pussy.

1593. Black Pussy Grows Thin
Black Pussy jumped back, spitting and snarling, and then darted around the corner of the house.

1594. Bobby Begins to Long for the Green Forest
He wanted to visit his old neighbors and see what they were doing.

1595. The Happiest Coon Ever
Farmer Brown's Boy was watching him and waved a hand.

1596. Bobby Coon Tries the Wrong House
Bobby stopped and looked up. Unc' Billy Possum was grinning down at him.

1597. A House That Wasn't
Where it stood was a stump with a lot of yellow chips scattered about.

Sometimes the minnow was tossed flapping on the bank and sometimes there would be only a spatter of flying drops all silvery in the moonlight. But whether he caught his fish or missed it, it was fun to Bobby.

And so he wandered on down the Laughing Brook, catching a minnow now and then, playing with bright, shiny bits of shell, pulling over sticks and stones to see what might be hidden under them, and wholly forgetful of everything save the good time he was having. There was time enough to look for a place to sleep when he grew tired, and that wouldn't be before morning.

STORY 1599. March 27, 1917

Bobby Coon Makes Another Mistake

All night long Bobby fished and played along the Laughing Brook, and when at last jolly, round, red Mr. Sun began his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky, Bobby was wet, tired, and sleepy. But he was happy. It did seem so good to be wandering about at his own sweet will in the beautiful Green Forest once more. It struck him now as rather a joke that he hadn't any house to go to. It was a long, long time since he had been without a home.

"I've got to sleep somewhere," said Bobby, rubbing his eyes and yawning, "and the sooner I find a place, the better. I'm so sleepy now I can hardly keep my eyes open. Hello, there's a great big log over there! If it is hollow, it will be just the place for me."

He marched straight over to the old log. It was big, very big, and to Bobby's great joy it was hollow, with an opening at one end. He was just going to crawl in, when Peter Rabbit popped out from behind a tree.

"Hello, Bobby Coon!" cried Peter joyously. "Where have you been? I was over where you used to live and found your house gone, and I was afraid something dreadful had happened to you. What did happen, and where have you been?"

Now, tired and sleepy as he was, Bobby had to stop and talk for a few minutes. You see, Peter was the first of his friends Bobby had met to whom he could tell all the wonderful things that had happened to him, and he was fairly aching to tell someone. So he sat down and told Peter how his hollow tree had been cut down, and how his leg had been broken, and how Farmer Brown's boy had taken him home and fixed that leg so that Old Mother Nature could make it as well and sound as ever, and how Farmer Brown's boy had brought him back to the Green Forest and set him free, and how he had been fishing all night and now was looking for a place to get a wink or two of sleep.

Peter's eyes had grown big and round with interest and wonder as he listened. It was the first time he had known of anyone having a broken leg to get just as well and strong as ever. And it was very exciting to think that Bobby Coon actually had lived right in Farmer Brown's house. It was almost too much to believe all at once.

"Now, if you'll excuse me, Peter, I'm going to turn in for a nap," Bobby ended,

and started to crawl in the end of the hollow log.

"Oh!" cried Peter. "Oh, you mustn't go in there, Bobby!"

But Bobby didn't hear him, or if he did, he didn't heed. He kept right on and disappeared. A funny look crept over Peter's face, and presently he began to chuckle. "I think I'll wait awhile and see what happens," said he.

Inside that big hollow log, Bobby found it very dry and warm and comfortable. There was a bed of dry leaves there, and it looked very inviting. Now ordinarily Bobby would have examined the inside of that log very thoroughly before going to sleep, but he was so tired and sleepy that he didn't half look around. He didn't go to the farther end at all. He just dropped right down midway, curled up, and in no time at all was fast asleep. It was a mistake, a very great mistake, as Bobby was shortly to find out. Meanwhile, outside sat Peter Rabbit, although it was already past time for him to be home in the dear Old Briar-patch.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 13)

STORY 1600. March 28, 1917

Bobby Coon Finds Out His Mistake

If friend of yours a mistake makes
  Nor yet has found it out,
I pray that when at last he does
  You will not be about.

It is bad enough to find out for yourself that you have made a mistake, but to have other people know it makes you feel a great deal worse. So the kindest thing that anyone can do when they know a friend has made a mistake and it is too late to warn them, is to appear not to know of it at all. So it wasn't nice at all of Peter Rabbit to hang around watching that old hollow log into which Bobby Coon had crawled for a nap. You see Peter knew that Bobby had made a mistake in going in there. Peter had tried to warn Bobby, but Bobby was too sleepy to heed what Peter said. Now Peter was waiting for something to happen.

Presently Peter's long ears caught sounds from inside that hollow log. First there was a rattling and rustling. Then came a series of grunts and squeaks. These were followed by growls and snarls. The latter were from Bobby Coon. He was insisting that he was going to stay right where he was and wouldn't move an inch for anyone. Peter clapped one hand over his mouth to keep from laughing aloud when he heard that, and he fastened his eyes, very big and round with expectation, on the opening in the end of the hollow log. You see, Peter knew all about that log and who lived there. That is what he had tried to tell Bobby Coon. He could hear Bobby declaring:

"I won't move a step, not a single step. You can stay right where you are until I finish my nap. If you come any nearer, I'll—"

Peter didn't hear the rest, if indeed Bobby finished what he had started to say. You

see, Bobby was interrupted by a great rattling and rustling and a grunt that sounded both angry and very business-like. Once more Bobby growled and snarled and declared he wouldn't move a step, but Peter noticed that Bobby's voice seemed to come from nearer the open end of the log than before. Again there was a grunt and a rattling and rustling.

Then out of the end of the old log backed Bobby Coon, still growling and snarling and declaring he wouldn't move a step. It was too funny for Peter to hold in any longer. He had to laugh. He couldn't help it. Then the black nose and little dull eyes of Prickly Porky the Porcupine appeared. In each of those little dull eyes there was just a wee spark of anger which made them less dull than usual. It was plain that Prickly Porky was provoked.

As soon as he was outside, he made the thousand little spears which he carries hidden in his coat stand on end, and made a quick little rush towards Bobby Coon. Bobby turned tail and ran. The sight of those sharp-pointed little spears was too much for him. He was afraid of them. Everybody is afraid of them, even big Buster Bear. It was these little spears brushing against the inside of the old log that had made the rattling and rustling Peter had heard.

"The impudence of that coon to walk into my house and go to sleep without so much as asking if he might, and then telling me that I can't come out until he says so! The impudence of him!" grunted Prickly Porky, rattling his thousand little spears.

As for Bobby Coon, he realized now the great mistake he had made in not first finding out whether any one was at home in that old log before trying to take a nap there. It mortified him to think he had been so careless as to make such a mistake, and it mortified him still more to know that Peter Rabbit had seen all that had happened.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 14)

STORY 1601. March 29, 1917

Once More Bobby Tries to Sleep

Did you ever have the Sandman
  Fill your eyes all full of sand
And then have to keep them open
  When there was no bed at hand?

If you have had that happen, then you know exactly how Bobby Coon felt when he was obliged to crawl out of Prickly Porky's bed and go hunt for another. He was so very, very sleepy that he felt almost as if he could go to sleep standing right on his feet. This was because he had been up all night and awake most of the day before. Now he wished that instead of spending the night in fishing and playing about the Laughing Brook, he had hunted for a house.

To be sleepy and not able to sleep makes Bobby cross, just as it does most folks. So, as he hurried away from the neighborhood of Prickly Porky and his thousand little

spears, he was in a bad temper. Of course, he knew it was his own fault that he was in such a fix, and this didn't make him feel a bit better. In fact, it made him feel worse. It usually is that way.

So he grumbled to himself as he went along. He didn't know where he was going. He was too cross and sleepy and upset to do any thinking. So he went along, aimlessly looking for a place where he might sleep undisturbed. At last he came to a tall stump, a great big old stump that had stood in the Green Forest for years and years. Bobby climbed to the top of it.

It was hollow, just as he had hoped. Indeed, it was just a shell. Looking down, Bobby saw with a great deal of satisfaction that the bottom was covered with a great mass of rotted wood. It would make a very comfortable bed. Moreover, it was plain that no one else was using it.

Bobby sighed with satisfaction. It was just the place for a good long nap. He could sleep there all day in perfect comfort. It wouldn't do for a home, because the top was open to the sky, and on a rainy day the inside of that stump would soon be a very wet place indeed. But for a nice long nap on a pleasant day, it would be hard to beat. Bobby sighed again, looked all about to make sure that no one was watching him, and then climbed down inside.

"I guess," muttered Bobby, as he curled up on the bed of rotted wood, which is sometimes called punk, "that at last I shall be allowed to sleep in peace. I never was more sleepy in all my life."

He yawned two or three times, changed his position for greater comfort, closed his eyes, and in a twinkling was asleep.

Now, though he thought no one saw him go into that old stump, someone did. That someone was Peter Rabbit. Peter had followed Bobby just out of curiosity. He had hidden behind trees so as to keep out of Bobby's sight. So he had seen Bobby climb the stump and disappear inside.

"I guess," said Peter, "that this time he will sleep in peace. No one is likely to find him there unless it should be that Sammy Jay or Blacky the Crow happens to fly over and so discover him. They wouldn't give him a bit of peace if they should. Hello! There's Blacky's voice now, and he seems to be coming this way. I think I will hang around a while longer."

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 15)

STORY 1602. March 30, 1917

Blacky the Crow Discovers Bobby Coon

Blacky the Crow is sharp of eye;
  His pleasure it is to peck and pry.
Truthful to be I confess, alack,
  Blacky the Crow is an imp in black.

It is true, I am sorry to say, that Blacky the Crow never is happier than when he is teasing someone and making them uncomfortable. He is an imp of mischief, is Blacky. Whatever business he has on hand he goes about it with one eye open for a chance to have fun at the expense of someone else. And there is little that those sharp eyes of his miss. He sees all that there is to see. Yes, sir, you may trust Blacky for that!

It was just the hard luck of Bobby Coon that no sooner was he asleep in that hollow stump in the Green Forest than along came Blacky the Crow, flying above the tree-tops on his way to his nest, but as usual watching sharply for what might be going on below. It just happened that he flew right over that stump, so that he could look right down inside that stump, and he did. He saw Bobby Coon curled up there asleep. Yes, indeed, you may be sure he saw Bobby.

Blacky checked himself in his flight and hovered for an instant right above that stump. Mischief fairly danced in his sharp eyes. Then he turned and silently flew down and alighted on the edge of the old stump. For a few minutes he sat there, looking down at Bobby Coon.

All the time he was chuckling to himself. Then he flew to the top of a tree and began to call with all his might.

"Caw caw, caw, ca-a-w, caw, caw!" he called. "Caw, ca-a-w, caw!"

Almost right away he was answered, and presently from all directions came hurrying his friends and relatives, each one cawing at the top of his voice and asking Blacky what he had found. Blacky didn't tell them until the last one came hurrying up. Then he told them to go look in the old hollow stump. One after another they flew over it, looking down, and one after another they shouted with glee. Then as many as could find a place on the edge of the old stump did so, while the others sat about in the trees or flew back and forth overhead, and all of them began to caw as hard as ever they could. Such a racket as they made!

Of course, Bobby Coon couldn't sleep. Certainly not. No one could have slept through that racket. He opened his eyes and looked up. He saw a ring of black heads looking down at him and mischief fairly dancing in the sharp eyes watching him. The instant it was known that he was awake, the noise redoubled.

"Ca-a-w, ca-a-w, ca-a-w, caw, caw, ca-a-w, caw, caw, caw!"

Bobby drew back his lips and snarled, and at that his tormentors fairly shrieked with glee. Then Blacky dropped a little stick down on Bobby and another crow did the same thing. Bobby scrambled to his feet and started to climb up. His tormentors took to the air and screamed louder than ever. Bobby stopped. What was the use of going up where they could get at him? They would pull his fur and make him most uncomfortable, and he knew he couldn't catch one of them to save him. He backed down and sat glaring up at them and telling them what dreadful things he would do to them if ever he should catch one of them. This delighted Blacky and his friends more than ever. They certainly were having great fun.

Finally Bobby did the wisest thing possible. He once more curled up and took no

notice at all of the black imps. Of course, he couldn't go to sleep with such a racket going on, but he pretended to sleep. Now you know there is no fun in trying to tease one who won't show he is teased. After a while Blacky and his friends got tired of screaming. They had had their fun, and one by one they flew about their business until at last the Green Forest was as still as still could be. Bobby sighed thankfully and once more fell asleep.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 16)

STORY 1603[16]. March 31, 1917

Buster Bear is Hungry

There's nothing worse of which I know
  Than hunger with no food to eat;
So do not blame poor Buster Bear
  Because his temper was not sweet.

At the beginning of Winter, Buster Bear had been fat with good living all through the Fall, when there was plenty of food. Then he had gone to sleep in his secret den and there he had remained asleep all Winter. You see there was none of the food Buster eats to be found in Winter and so old Mother Nature had put him to sleep just as she did Johnny Chuck and Old Mr. Toad and some others.

With the first hint of the coming of sweet Mistress Spring, Buster awoke, and the first thing he thought of was his stomach. It was so empty that it made him feel hollow all over. He was very thin—very thin indeed. I guess any of us would be thin if we went all Winter without eating, don't you?

So soon as he could get the kinks out of his legs, Buster Bear started to find something to eat. But for a while there was little to find. Where the frost had come out of the ground along the edge of the Laughing Brook he dug out a few roots. He even gnawed a little bark, of which he is not at all fond.

What he did find was just enough to make him feel still more hungry, and this dreadful feeling of hunger all the time soured Buster's usually sunny temper so that he was as cross as two sticks and everybody who saw him kept out of his way. He did a lot of wandering about. The more he wandered the more likely he was to find something to eat. And his wits were sharp. They usually are sharp, but now they were sharper than ever, for you know there is nothing like hunger to sharpen wits. So it happened that the instant he heard the voices of Blacky the Crow and his relatives making a great racket in a distant part of the Green Forest he sat up to listen and a look of great cunning crept into his face.

"There's something going on over there," muttered Buster. "Blacky and his friends have discovered something. It may not be anything to eat and then again it may be. I can tell by their voices that there is no danger there, and if there is no danger I better look into the matter. Blacky has found more than one meal for me before this. Anyway

16 This story is not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

I'm going to take a chance. I've got nothing to lose, and it might be that I will have something to gain. Goodness knows, I hope so. That last root I dug up is rolling around in my stomach so lonesome that I almost wish I hadn't eaten it. I wonder what it would seem like to sit down to a good square meal and really fill my stomach once more. Gr-r-r-r! I'm hungry enough to eat stones."

Buster dropped to all fours and headed toward the place where Blacky the Crow and his friends were making such a noise. He hurried, but in spite of his hurry and his great size Buster moved as silently as a great black shadow.

No one can move more quietly than great big Buster Bear when he wants to. Every few steps he would pause to listen, then hurry forward again. Before he got in sight of the place where Blacky and his friends were the noise ceased. This was suspicious. Buster stopped and listened with his head first on one side and then on the other. Presently he heard the voices growing fainter in different directions and he knew that Blacky and his friends had left the place where he had first heard them. The excitement was all over. Buster was undecided what to do. Finally he made up his mind to keep on. Perhaps he would find something or someone to tell him what all that fuss was about.

STORY 1604. April 2, 1917

The Surprise of the Two Cousins

Peter Rabbit should have been back home in the dear Old Briar-patch long ago. He knew that Mrs. Peter was worrying. She always worries when Peter overstays. But Peter was not giving much thought to Mrs. Peter. In fact, I am afraid he was not giving any thought to her. You see, he was too full of curiosity about Bobby Coon and what might happen to him. He had seen Bobby turned out of Prickly Porky's hollow log and had followed Bobby. From behind a tree, he had watched Bobby climb the tall, old, hollow stump and disappear inside. Then he had heard the voice of Blacky the Crow, and had waited to see if anything more would happen.

Of course he had seen Blacky and his relatives and friends torment Bobby. He had been sorry for Bobby in a way, yet it had seemed like a great joke that any one as sleepy as Bobby was shouldn't be able to sleep. So I am afraid Peter rather enjoyed the excitement.

When finally Blacky and his friends grew tired and went about their business, Peter began to think of getting back to the dear Old Briar-patch.

"I guess Bobby will sleep in peace now," thought Peter. "I can't think of anything more that possibly can happen to disturb him. Poor Bobby. He has had a hard time getting that nap."

Still Peter hung around. He didn't know just why, but he had a feeling that he might miss something if he left, and you know Peter never could forgive himself if he missed anything worth seeing.

So he hung around for some time after Blacky and his friends had gone about their

Illustrations. March 26 to March 31, 1917.

1598. Bobby Coon Goes Fishing
But whether he caught his fish or missed it, it was great fun to Bobby.

1599. Bobby Coon Makes Another Mistake
"Hello, Bobby Coon!" cried Peter, joyously. "Where have you been?"

1600. Bobby Coon Finds Out His Mistake
"The impudence of him!" grunted Prickly Porky, rattling his thousand little spears.

1601. Once More Bobby Tries to Sleep
"I guess," said Peter, "that this time he will sleep in peace."

1602. Blacky the Crow Discovers Bobby Coon
Then he turned and silently flew down to the edge of the old stump.

1603. Buster Bear is Hungry
"There's something going on over there," muttered Buster.

business. At last he had just about made up his mind that he would better be starting for home when he was startled by the snapping of a little twig. Peeping out from behind a big tree, Peter stared towards the place from which that sound had come. In a moment he saw a big black form.

"Buster Bear!" gasped Peter. "It's the first time I have seen him this spring. My, how thin he is!"

Peter looked about to make sure that the way was clear for a hasty run if it should be necessary and then held his breath as Buster drew near. Buster kept stopping to look and listen and sniff the air, and suddenly Peter understood.

"He heard those noisy crows, and he has come to see what it was all about," thought Peter, which was just exactly the case, as you and I know.

Buster knew that it was just about this place that Blacky and his friends had been making such a racket, and his greedy little eyes searched everywhere for some sign of what had been going on. But there was nothing to be seen but a black feather at the foot of a tall old stump. By this Buster knew for sure that he had found the place where Blacky and his friends had been, but there was nothing to tell him why they had been there. Buster sat up and blinked thoughtfully. Then as he looked at the old stump, his eyes brightened.

"I don't know what all that fuss was about," he muttered, "and I guess I never will know, but I'm glad I came just the same. That old stump looks to me to be rotten and hollow. I have found ant nests in many an old stump like that, and beetles and grubs. I'll just see what this one contains."

Buster walked over to the old stump, hooked his great claws into a crack, and pulled with all his might. Peter Rabbit, watching, held his breath with excitement. There was a sharp cracking sound, and then the whole side of that old stump gave way so suddenly that Buster Bear fell over backwards. As he did so, Bobby Coon rolled out, half awake and frightened almost out of his wits. It was hard to say which was the most surprised of those two cousins, Buster Bear or Bobby Coon.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 17)

STORY 1605. April 3, 1917

Buster Bear's Short Temper

It's such a very foolish thing,
  So silly and so heedless,
To lose your temper when you know
  It is so wholly needless.

When Buster Bear scrambled to his feet after tearing open the tall, hollow stump in the Green Forest and saw his cousin, Bobby Coon, scrambling to his feet, Buster straightway lost his temper. It was a foolish thing to do, a very foolish thing to do. There really wasn't the least excuse in the world for it. And yet Buster mustn't be

blamed too much. You see, he wasn't really himself. Ordinarily Buster is one of the best-natured people in all the Green Forest. He doesn't begin to be as short-tempered as ever so many others are. In fact, he isn't short-tempered at all.

But just now Buster was hungry. He was very hungry. He was so hungry that he couldn't think of anything but his stomach and how empty it was. You see, so early in the spring there was very little for him to eat, and he had to hunt and hunt to find that little. When he had started to tear open that tall old stump, he had hoped that inside he would find either a nest of ants, or some of the worms and insects that like to bury themselves in rotting wood. So when Bobby Coon came rolling out, Buster was so disappointed that he quite lost his temper before he had time to think. He flew into a rage. You see, he just took it for granted that Bobby Coon had been in that hollow stump for the very same purpose that he himself had torn it open.

Now it never does to take things for granted. You know and I know that Bobby Coon had crawled into that stump only to sleep.

Buster didn't know this, and Buster didn't stop to find it out. He growled a terribly deep, ugly-sounding growl that made all of Peter Rabbit's hair stand on end. You know, Peter was close by, hiding behind a big tree to see all that might happen. Then Buster Bear started for his cousin, Bobby Coon, and his little eyes seemed to fairly snap fire.

"I'll teach you to steal an honest Bear's dinner!" he growled in his deep grumbly, rumbly voice.

Now this wasn't fair to Bobby, for Bobby had stolen no dinner. Even if he had been hunting for food in that hollow stump, he would have done no injustice to Buster Bear. But Buster didn't stop to think of this.

"You'll pay for it by furnishing me a dinner yourself!" growled Buster.

"But I'm your cousin!" cried Bobby, as he started to run.

"That doesn't make a bit of difference," snapped Buster. "I'm hungry enough to eat my own brother if I had one."

All the time Buster was scrambling after Bobby Coon, and Bobby was running for his life. Now big as he is, Buster can move very fast when he is in a hurry, especially when he is thin and lean.

Bobby Coon squealed with fright and scrambled up a big tree faster than he ever had scrambled up a tree before in all his life. Buster growled a deep, grumbly, rumbly growl and started up after him.

"Oh! Oh!" cried Bobby Coon, and you may be sure he was very much awake by this time. There was no thought of sleep in Bobby's head as he scrambled nearly to the top of that big tree. Peter Rabbit stared in horror. Surely Buster Bear would catch Bobby now!

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 18)

STORY 1606. April 4, 1917

Bobby Coon Gets a Terrible Shaking

Leave me alone! I've never done you any harm, so leave me alone!" whimpered Bobby Coon, as he climbed the tall tree with Buster Bear scrambling up after him and growling all the way. For a minute or two Bobby wished he had stayed on the ground. You see, he had forgotten that Buster Bear could climb quite as well as he could. Now he was in the tree, and Buster was below him, and it looked very much as if Bobby had trapped himself.

Suddenly he remembered that Buster couldn't go out on little branches as he could, because Buster was too big and heavy. Bobby looked about him, and fear made his eyes quick to see.

One branch reached over almost to the top of a slender young tree growing near. If he could get over into that tree, perhaps he could get back to the ground and run for his life. Anyway, it was worth trying. Out along the branch went Bobby as far as he could, and then, with his heart in his mouth, he jumped for the slender young tree. It was a good jump, and he caught hold of a branch of the young tree. Then he turned to see what Buster Bear was about.

Now there is nothing slow about Buster Bear's wits. The moment he saw Bobby run out on that branch, he knew just what was in Bobby's mind.

"Huh!" grunted Buster to himself. "If he thinks he can catch me napping with such an old trick as that, he will have to think again."

He waited only long enough to make sure that Bobby would jump for the other tree, and then Buster went down faster than he had come up. You see, he just dropped for the last half of the distance. So by the time Bobby Coon was half-way down the slender tree, Buster Bear was at the foot of it, waiting for him. Poor Bobby! At first he thought he was no better off than before. There was no other tree he could reach from this one. Now all Buster would have to do would be to climb up and get him. Bobby was about ready to give up in despair.

But Buster didn't climb up. He didn't even try. He just stood there at the foot of the tree and growled. Every growl made at shiver of fright run all over Bobby.

Why didn't Buster hurry up and get him? All in a flash it came to Bobby why Buster didn't. He didn't because he couldn't! That was the reason. He couldn't climb that tree because it was too small for him to climb. He is such a big fellow that he has to have a good-sized tree to get his arms around. Once more Bobby began to hope.

But Buster Bear isn't one to give up easily. No, sir, Buster doesn't give up until he has tried all the things he can think of. Now he stood up and took hold of that tree almost as if he were going to try to climb it. At first Bobby thought he was, but in a minute, he found out his mistake. Buster began to shake that tree. My, my, my, how he did shake it! He was trying to shake Bobby Coon down.

The very first shake caught Bobby by surprise, and he very nearly lost his hold. Then he saw what Buster was up to, and he held on for dear life. He held on with arms

and legs and teeth. Back and forth swung that tree and Bobby with it. It was worse, very much worse, than the hardest wind Bobby ever had been out in. But he grimly held on with claws and teeth, and over and over he said to himself:

"I won't let go. I won't let go. I won't let go." And he didn't.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 19)

STORY 1607. April 5, 1917

Peter Rabbit Saves Bobby Coon

There are heroes who are heroes
First in thought and then in fact.
Others are made into heroes,
Quite by accident, in fact.

Real heroes are those who do brave deeds, knowing all the time just what they are about, what risks they are taking, what will happen if they fail, and yet do the brave deeds just the same. The other kind of heroes are not real, true heroes at all, but are treated as if they were and are made just as much of as if they were. They are the ones who do what seem to be brave deeds, but which in truth haven't been planned at all and have been done unintentionally.

People, who in trying to save their own lives happen to save the lives of others, always are called heroes and are much looked up to and made of when in truth they are not heroes at all.

Peter Rabbit is this kind of a hero. He saved Bobby Coon's life. At least, Bobby Coon is kind enough to say he did. Anyway, he made it possible for Bobby to escape from angry Buster Bear. So Peter is called a hero and has been made much of. Everybody says that he was very, very brave. But right down in his own heart, Peter knows that he doesn't deserve any of the nice things said about him. True, he did save Bobby Coon, but he didn't do it purposely. No, sir, he didn't do it purposely. Perhaps he might have, if he had thought of it, but he didn't think of it. What he did wasn't the result of thinking and planning at all, but of not thinking; of carelessness and heedlessness, if you please.

But it made a hero of Peter in the eyes of his friends and neighbors just the same. You see, it was this way:

When Buster Bear tore open the tall old stump in which Bobby Coon was sleeping Peter had been watching from behind a big tree. He had seen Bobby Coon climb the big tree with Buster after him, growling fiercely. He had seen Bobby Jump over into the slender, young tree growing near, and Buster Bear promptly drop down and rush over to the foot of that young tree before Bobby could get down out of it, it was all terribly exciting. Peter's heart was all with Bobby Coon. Peter's heart always is with the one who is being hunted, no matter who it is, even when it is Reddy Fox with Bowser the Hound at his heels.

When Buster Bear began to shake that slender young tree, trying to shake Bobby Coon out of it, Peter forgot everything but his desire to see what would happen. From where he was behind that big tree, he couldn't clearly see Bobby Coon in the top of the slender young tree. So, quite forgetting that he might be in danger himself, Peter hopped out from behind that big tree to try to find a place where he could see better. In his curiosity and excitement, he heedlessly forgot to watch his steps and trod on a dry stick that broke with a little snap.

Now, no one in all the Green Forest has keener ears than Buster Bear. In spite of the fact that his attention was all on Bobby Coon, he heard that little snap and whirled like a flash to see what had made it.

There sat round-eyed Peter Rabbit, staring with all his might. Without pausing an instant, Buster sprang for Peter. He would make very good eating, as Buster well knew, and a Rabbit on the ground was better than a Coon he couldn't shake out of a tree.

Peter dodged just in time and with a squeal of fear away he went, lipperty-lipperty-lip, twisting, dodging, running with all his might, and after him crashed Buster Bear. How Peter did wish that he hadn't been so curious but had gone home to the dear Old Briar-patch when he should have! He was too frightened to know when Buster Bear gave up the chase, but kept right on running. As a matter of fact, Buster didn't chase him far.

He knew that Peter was too nimble for him to catch in a tail-end race. So presently he gave it up and hurried back. Bobby Coon was nowhere in sight. He had taken the chance to climb down from that tree and run away. By leading Buster off for just those few minutes, Peter had saved Bobby Coon, and though he hadn't done it purposely, he got the credit just the same. He became a hero. This is a funny old world, isn't it?

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 20)

STORY 1608[17]. April 6, 1917

Buster Bear Regains His Lost Temper

Gone was Peter Rabbit and gone was Bobby Coon. Buster Bear knew well enough that there wasn't the least use in trying to follow either one of them. He knew he couldn't catch Peter, and he didn't know where Bobby Coon had gone. He might just as well forgot that he ever had laid eyes on them. Of course all this didn't improve Buster Bear's temper a bit. It made it worse if anything. Deep down in his throat Buster Bear growled grumbly, rumbly growls as he shuffled along back to the tall, old stump in which he had found Bobby Coon. He might as well have a look at that stump while he was there, he thought. Of course Bobby Coon had eaten up any food that might have been in it, but anyway he would look.

Now Bobby Coon hadn't done anything of the kind, as you and I know. In the first place, when he had climbed into that hollow stump his stomach had been too full of fish caught in the Laughing Brook for him to even think of eating. In the second place

17 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

he was too sleepy. All he had thought of or wanted in that old stump was a place to sleep. So he hadn't even dug over the surface of the rotted wood at the bottom to see what might be in it.

This Buster Bear found out as soon as he got back to the old stump and looked at it. For a minute he was ashamed to think he had treated Bobby so. At least a look of shame crept over his face. Then he eagerly began to tear that stump all to pieces with his great claws. He tore out all that rotted wood at the bottom, and in it he found the very thing he most wanted—a nest of ants.

"Yum, yum, yum," muttered Buster Bear as his long tongue swept the hurrying, scurrying ants into his mouth. It didn't trouble him at all that a lot of rotted wood went with them. "Yum, yum, yum," said he, smacking his lips and clawing away at the old stump and sweeping up the ants with his tongue.

When he couldn't find another ant, Buster sat up and grinned at nothing and no one in particular. He grinned just because he felt good. He was his usual good-natured self. To be sure, those ants were not very filling, but they were something, and they had tasted good. You know there is nothing Buster is more fond of unless it is honey or sugar.

"I guess I wasn't fair to my cousin, Bobby Coon," said Buster thoughtfully. "On the whole, I'm glad I didn't catch the scamp. I certainly should have eaten him if I had, and that would have been the end of him. As it is, he is safe and I'm glad of it. I don't want to hurt him. I don't want to hurt anybody. If I always had plenty to eat no one would have any need to fear me at all. It's an empty stomach that makes me cross and savage and hateful. Hunger is about the worst thing I know of. It always did make me cross. I guess it always will. I certainly gave that scamp, Peter Rabbit, a scare. I wonder if he is still running. I don't suppose he will dare come within speaking distance of me again this Summer.

"That will be too bad. It certainly will. I like the little scamp. I like to see him around. And he is such a gossip that he is quite useful at times. Well, I'm sorry I lost my temper, but I've got it back now. I think I'll go fishing."

So Buster Bear shuffled off in the direction of the Laughing Brook, his good nature quite restored. Meanwhile Peter Rabbit made his way home to the dear Old Brier Patch and the scolding he knew Mrs. Peter would give him. Bobby Coon was hunting for a place to sleep, and there was peace and quiet in the Green Forest.

STORY 1609. April 7, 1917

Bobby Coon Finds a Home at Last

When Buster Bear started to chase Peter Rabbit it gave Bobby Coon a chance he was not slow in accepting. Buster had given Bobby a terrible shaking up in the top of that young tree, but in spite of that he had his wits about him. He needed them, and he knew he needed them. So the very instant Buster Bear started after Peter Rabbit, down from that tree scrambled Bobby Coon. Never in all his life had he scrambled down a

tree faster. He knew that Buster would not follow Peter far, and so he, Bobby, had no time to lose. He would get just as far from that place as he could before Buster should return.

So while Peter Rabbit was running, lipperty-lipperty-lip, in one direction as fast as ever he could, Bobby Coon was running in the opposite direction, and his black feet were moving astonishingly fast. He didn't know where he was going, but he was on his way somewhere, anywhere, to get out of the neighborhood of Buster Bear. So Bobby took little heed of where he was going, but ran until he was too tired to run anymore. His heart was beating thumpity-thump-thump, thumpity-thump-thump, and he was breathing so hard that every breath was a gasp and hurt. He just had to stop. He couldn't run another step.

As he puffed and puffed, trying to get air enough into his poor lungs, he listened for sounds of Buster Bear. Bobby's ears are very keen, but keen as they are they cannot hear what doesn't exist, and so they told Bobby nothing whatever of pursuit by Buster Bear. Of course not.

You remember Buster didn't even try to follow Bobby. He didn't even know in which direction Bobby had gone. So though he listened and listened Bobby didn't hear so much as the rustle of a leaf. It was very, very quiet there in the Green Forest.

After a while Bobby's heart stopped going thumpity-thumpity-thump, and he once more breathed easily. He knew that he had escaped. He was safe. He sighed, and that sigh was a happy little sigh. Then he grinned. He was thinking of how hard he had tried to get a chance to sleep that day, and how every time he thought he had found a bed, he had been turned out of it almost as soon as he had closed his eyes. Bobby has a sense of fun, and now he saw the funny side of all his experiences.

"There is one thing sure, and that is being without a home is a more serious matter than I thought it was," said he. "I thought it would be easy enough to find a place to sleep when I wanted to, but I've begun to think that it is about the hardest thing I've ever tried. Here I am in a strange part of the Green Forest and homeless. There's no use in going back where I used to live, so I may as well look around here and see what I can find. Perhaps there is an empty house somewhere near. Most anything will do for a while."

So Bobby began to look about for an empty house. Now, of course, he had in mind a hollow tree or log. He always had lived in a hollow tree, and so he preferred one now.

But he soon found that hollow trees were few and far between in that part of the Green Forest, and those he did find didn't have hollows big enough for him. The same thing was true of hollow logs. He was getting discouraged when he came to a ledge of rock which was the foundation of a little hill deep in the Green Forest.

In this ledge of rock Bobby discovered a crack big enough for him to squeeze into. Just out of curiosity he did squeeze into it, and then he discovered that after a little it grew wider and formed the snuggest little cave he ever had seen. It was very dry and comfortable in there. All in a flash it came to Bobby that the only thing needed to make this the snuggest kind of a house was a bed of dry leaves, and these were easy to get.

Bobby's eyes danced.

"I've found my new home," he declared out loud. "It can't be cut down as my old home was; Buster Bear can't tear it open with his great claws; no one bigger than I can get into it. It's the safest and best house in all the Green Forest, and I'm going to stay right here."

Right then and there Bobby Coon curled up for that sleep he so much needed.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 21)

STORY 1610. April 9, 1917

Bobby Coon's Nearest Neighbor

In his new home in the little cave in the ledge of rocks deep in the Green Forest which he had found by accident, Bobby Coon at last slept peacefully. There was no one to disturb him, and so he made up for all the time he had lost. He slept all the rest of that day, and when he awoke, jolly, round red Mr. Sun had gone to bed behind the Purple Hills, and Mistress Moon had taken his place in the sky.

At first, Bobby couldn't think where he was. He rubbed his eyes and stared hard at the stone walls of his bedroom and wondered where he was and how he came to be there.

Then, little by little, he remembered all that had happened—how he had made a mistake in thinking he could take Unc' Billy Possum's home away from him; how he had heedlessly crept into Prickly Porky's house for a nap, only to be driven out by Prickly Porky himself; how he had found a splendid hollow stump but had been discovered there by Blacky the Crow and afterward by Buster Bear; how Buster Bear had chased him and given him a terrible shaking in the top of a slender young tree; how Buster had stopped to chase Peter Rabbit; how he, Bobby, had taken this chance to run until he could run no more and found himself in a strange part of the Green Forest; how he had looked in vain for a hollow tree in which to make a new home, and lastly how he had found this little cave in the ledge of rock. Little by little, all this came back to Bobby, as he lay stretching and yawning.

At last, he scrambled to his feet and began to examine his new house more carefully than he had when he first entered. The more he studied it, the better he liked it. Having no one else to talk to, he talked to himself.

"The first and most important thing to look for in a house is safety," said he. "I used to think a good stout hollow tree was the safest place in the world, but I was mistaken. Men can cut hollow trees down. That is what happened to my old house. But it can't happen here. No, sir, it can't possibly happen here. Neither can Buster Bear tear it open with his great claws. And the entrance is so narrow that no one of whom I need be afraid can possibly get in here. This is the safest place I've ever seen.

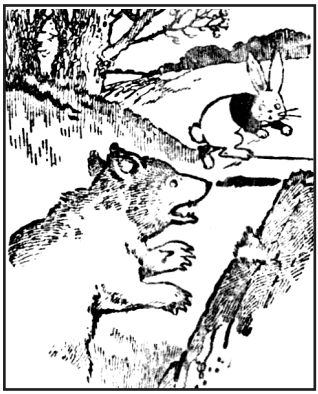
"The next most important thing is dryness. A damp house is bad, very bad. It is uncomfortable, and it is bad for the health. This place is perfectly dry. It will be

Illustrations. April 2 to April 7, 1917.

1604. The Surprise of the Two Cousins
"Buster Bear!" gasped Peter. "It's the first time I have seen him this spring."

1605. Buster Bear's Short Temper
Buster Bear growled a deep grumbly, rumbly growl and started up after him.

1606. Bobby Coon gets a Terrible Shaking
He just stood there at the foot of the tree and growled.



1607. Peter Rabbit Saves Bobby Coon
Peter dodged just in time.
"

1608. Buster Bear Regains His Lost Temper
"I guess I wasn't fair to my cousin Bobby Coon," said Buster thoughtfully.

1609. Bobby Coon Finds a Home at Last
In this ledge of rock Bobby discovered a crack big enough for him to squeeze into.

warm in winter and cool in summer. I can't imagine a more comfortable house. The only thing lacking is a good bed, and that I'll soon make. On the whole, I guess the finding of this new house is worth all I went through. Now I think I'll go out and get acquainted with the neighborhood and see if I have got any near neighbors."

So Bobby went out through the narrow entrance and began to look about to see what he could discover. "I think," said he, "that I'll follow this ledge and see if there are any more caves like mine. I might find a better one, though I doubt it."

He shuffled along, light of heart and brimming over with excitement and curiosity. You know it always is great fun to explore a strange place. He had gone but a little way when he came to a sort of big open cave in the rock. Bobby stopped and peered in. Almost the first thing he saw was a bed. It was a big bed, and it was made of dry leaves and little branches of hemlock. It was a very good bed, and it was clear that someone had been sleeping in it very recently. Bobby's eyes grew very round. Then he sniffed.

That one sniff was enough. Bobby turned and ran back to his new house as fast as his legs would take him. All the pleasure he had taken in his new home was gone. He had discovered that his nearest neighbor was none other than Buster Bear himself!

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 22, "Bobby Finds He Has a Neighbor")

STORY 1611. April 10, 1917

Buster Bear Finds Bobby Coon

Bobby Coon was back in his new house— the little cave in the rocky ledge deep in the Green Forest, and never was he or any member of his family more upset. You see, he had started out in high spirits to see what was to be seen about his new home and to find out who his neighbors might be, and he hadn't much more than started when he discovered that his nearest neighbor was none other than Buster Bear. Wasn't that enough to upset anybody? Anyway, it was enough to upset Bobby Coon, for only a few hours before Buster Bear had tried to catch him and had threatened to eat him. So all desire to spend the night looking about left Bobby the very instant he found Buster Bear's home in that very same rocky ledge in which his own new home was.

"What a dreadful fix, what a dreadful, dreadful fix I'm in," whined Bobby. "Here I've found the best home I've ever had, and now I find that Buster Bear lives almost next door. I don't dare stay here, and I haven't any place to go. Oh, dear, oh, dear, what can a poor little fellow like me do? I wish I were as big as Buster Bear. I do. Then I'd fight him. I would. I'd fight him."

"Who would you fight?" demanded a great, deep, grumbly, rumbly voice from outside his doorway.

Bobby just dropped right down where he was and shook with fright. But he took great care not to make a sound, not the teeniest, weeniest sound. Perhaps Buster Bear didn't know who it was he had overheard. Perhaps, if he kept perfectly still, Buster would think he had been mistaken.

"Who are you in there, anyway?" demanded the deep, grumbly, rumbly voice. "I didn't know any one was living here. Why don't you come out and be sociable?"

Bobby simply shivered and kept his tongue still. For a minute or two there was no sound from outside. Then there were three long sniffs—sniff, sniff, sniff! They made Bobby shiver more than ever.

"Oh, ho! So it's you, Bobby Coon! It's my little Cousin Bobby!" exclaimed the deep, grumbly, rumbly voice of Buster Bear, followed by a chuckle. "Welcome to the old rock ledge, Bobby. Welcome to the old rock ledge. If I am to have such a near neighbor, I'm glad it is to be you. Come out and shake hands. Don't be so bashful. I won't hurt you."

At that Bobby pricked up his ears a little. He knew that Buster's nose had told him all he wanted to know, and that there was no use to pretend any longer.

"Do you really mean that, Cousin Buster?" he asked in a faint voice.

"Certainly I mean it. Of course. Why not? I usually mean what I say," grumbled Buster Bear.

"That's just the trouble," replied Bobby timidly. "Just a little while ago you tried to catch me and said that you would eat me, and I thought you meant it. You acted as if you did."

Buster Bear began to chuckle and then to laugh, and his laugh was deep and grumbly rumbly like his voice.

"That's so, Bobby! That's so!" said he. "But that was when my stomach was so empty that it made me lose my temper. Now my stomach is full, and I'm really myself. You know you don't need to be afraid of me when I am myself. Just forget that little affair. I should have, if you hadn't reminded me of it. I'm glad you've decided to be neighborly. You couldn't make your home in a safer place. I'm going to take a nap now. Come over and see me when you feel like it. Be neighborly, cousin Bobby. Be neighborly."

With this Buster Bear went shuffling along to his own house and bed.

(*The Adventures of Bobby Coon*, Chapter 23)

STORY 1612[18]. April 11, 1917

Why Bobby Coon Decided to Stay

When Buster Bear departed to take a nap in his own bed in his own house, he left a very much troubled and uncertain Coon in the little cave in the rocky ledge. Yes, sir, he certainly did. At first Bobby was for getting away from there just as soon as he could be sure that the way was clear and safe. The very thought of having Buster Bear for such a near neighbor gave him chills. But he didn't dare start right away, because he wasn't sure, absolutely sure, that Buster Bear had gone to his home for a nap. He might, he

18 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

just might be waiting outside waiting outside ready to pounce on Bobby the instant he should come out.

So there was nothing to do but stay a while, and this gave him time to think. Sometimes it is a good thing to have to think. If there was more thinking there would be fewer mistakes made. At first all of Bobby's thinking was of how he could get away and where he would go. But after a little he began to think of what Buster Bear had said and how really friendly Buster had seemed. He hadn't sounded at all as if he intended to do Bobby any harm. "He sounded just as if he meant what he said about being glad that I am to be his nearest neighbor, and that he hoped I would be neighborly," said Bobby to himself. "Of course, if I could be sure that he wouldn't try to catch me I would stay. This is the very best house I ever was in. It doesn't seem right to have to give it up when I've just found it. I never in my life felt safer than I do right here this minute. Not even a hunter could get me here, and he could in a hollow tree. Buster Bear said I couldn't make my home in a safer place, and, my goodness, I believe he is right. If it wasn't the safest place in the Green Forest, he never would be making his home here in this same rocky ledge. I don't know of any one more bashful and retiring than my cousin, Buster Bear. If he lives here, and he does, because I have seen his house and bed, it means that there are mighty few visitors to this part of the Green Forest."

The more Bobby thought this over the more uncertain he grew about leaving. And then another thought popped into his head. If anybody came prowling about there and found that Buster Bear made his home there they would be sure to leave in a hurry and not come back, for everybody, even Old Man Coyote has the greatest respect for great big Buster Bear. Was that was that what Buster meant when he said that Bobby couldn't have chosen a safer place to make his home in? A house that no one bigger than he could get into in a place that everyone would keep away from through fear of and respect for Buster Bear—what could be better?

"Buster never has bothered me but that once, and then he lost his temper because he was so hungry," thought Bobby. "Spring is here and food soon will be plentiful. That means that Buster will soon be able to fill his big stomach whenever he is hungry. When his stomach is full Buster is the best-natured fellow in all the Green Forest. If I can't keep out of his way when he is hungry and his temper is short I deserve to be caught. I—I—want to stay. I—I—believe I will stay. I can leave any time if I have to. Yes, I WILL stay."

Having made up his mind to this Bobby suddenly felt a great deal better. He felt so much better that he actually ventured out and stole along to a place from which he could safely peep into Buster Bear's house. Buster was fast asleep. Bobby hurried back and gathered some dry leaves to make a bed in his own house. Somehow his heart felt lighter, very much lighter.

STORY 1613[19]. April 12, 1917

Bobby Coon Discovers a New Neighbor

19 This story was not included in *The Adventures of Bobby Coon*.

Bobby Coon found Buster Bear as good as his word. He didn't bother Bobby a bit. In fact, he was the best kind of a neighbor because he attended to his own affairs and didn't meddle with Bobby's at all. Sometimes when he was passing Bobby's house, he would stop long enough to wish Bobby good luck in his deep, grumbly, rumbly voice, and Bobby always wished him good luck in return. He took special pains to do this and to be polite about it. You know, nothing is lost by being polite.

So Bobby soon felt quite happy and safe and contented in his new home and began to spend very much of his time in getting acquainted with the neighborhood. He would wait until he had seen Buster Bear start off for another part of the Green Forest and then he would come out and prowl around to his heart's content. At first, he thought that Buster Bear was his only near neighbor, but one afternoon he made a discovery and in so doing he had an adventure.

Bobby, you know, has a liking for fresh eggs. In the Spring he always keeps his eyes open for nests. He doesn't see any reason why he shouldn't help himself to a few eggs if he is smart enough to find them. He says the birds can lay more, and, anyway, they should hide their nests where they cannot be found. This particular afternoon he was exploring a hollow not far from his new home, a hollow he had not visited before, when he discovered in the top of a tall pine tree a nest. At least from the ground it looked like a nest—a rough nest of a size that reminded him of one he had once found belonging to Blacky the Crow. To be sure, he hadn't seen anything of Blacky around here, nor heard him, but he knows Blacky well enough to know that Blacky is very quiet around his home.

This particular nest didn't look very promising. In fact, it looked like an old one. But he couldn't see it very well because of the branches in the way, and, anyway, you never can tell what you may find. It wouldn't be much trouble to climb up there. It never is much trouble to Bobby to climb a tree. And if there should happen to be eggs there—well, Bobby's mouth fairly watered at the mere thought.

He was about halfway up that tree when something struck him so hard that he almost fell and made him squeal. He was as much frightened as he was hurt, for he hadn't heard a sound.

"What are you after? What business have you here?" demanded a fierce-sounding voice.

Bobby clung to the tree and turned to see who was speaking. A pair of the fiercest great eyes stared into his own. Hastily Bobby began to back down the tree.

"I—I—I—" began Bobby.

"Who-oo?" demanded the voice.

"If you please, Hooty, I didn't mean any harm. Honestly, I didn't. I didn't know this was your tree," cried Bobby. With a sharp hiss, Hooty the Owl swooped, his terrible great claws, which looked five times as big as they really were, stretched to seize Bobby. Just in time Bobby dodged around the trunk of the tree.

"I'm getting down as fast as I can, Hooty," he whimpered. "If I had had the least

idea that that was your nest I never, never, never would have thought of visiting it." And this was true. He never would have.

Hooty snapped his bill with a horrid little clicking sound, hissed again, and—well, Bobby didn't wait to see what he would do next. Bobby just let go and dropped. Then he took to his heels, too scared to even look over his shoulder to see if he was being followed.

Thus it was that Bobby Coon discovered that he had another neighbor, Hooty the Owl, and thus it was that for a time he lost all desire for eggs. "Anyway, it's a very select neighborhood," muttered Bobby as he scrambled into his home.

STORY 1614. April 13, 1917

Danny Meadow Mouse Listens to a Call

The meadows green are calling us, are calling us, are calling us!
The meadows green are calling us: "Come home! Come home!" they plead.
The meadows green are calling us, are calling us, are calling us!
The meadows green are calling us and we that hear must heed.

Danny Meadow Mouse kept singing this foolish little song over and over until it quite got on the nerves of his cousin, Nibbler the House Mouse. You remember that Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse had spent the Winter in Farmer Brown's barn[20]. It had been a very comfortable Winter—quite the most comfortable Winter they ever had known.

"There's only one thing wrong with it here," said Danny to his cousin Nibbler, who, you know, is very, very timid.

"What is that?" asked Nibbler.

"Life isn't exciting enough," replied Danny.

"Not exciting enough!" squeaked Nibbler. "My goodness, Cousin Danny, I don't know what you call exciting. Indeed I don't. With Black Pussy spending half her time out here life is altogether too exciting to be comfortable to me."

Danny turned up his nose. "Black Pussy is the only one we have to watch out for, and anyone with half an eye I can keep out of her way. If you think she's dangerous you ought to be hunted awhile by Reddy Fox and Old Man Coyote and Redtail the Hawk and Hooty the Owl. THEY are the hunters who know how to hunt. Yes, siree! It's play to keep out of the way of Black Pussy compared with keeping out of the way of any of those others.

"Out on the Green Meadows I have to watch out for all of them and some more besides. Blacky the Crow takes it into his black head to hunt me once in a while, and I never know when Billy Mink may grow tired of fish and think he wants a Meadow Mouse dinner. Digger the Badger is another clever hunter. Then there is Mr. Blacksnake. If you haven't been chased by Mr. Blacksnake you don't know what

20 STORIES 1510-1526, 1916.

excitement is, Nibbler."

Nibbler hastened to say that he didn't want to know. There were dangers enough for him right there in Farmer Brown's barn. The Green Meadows must be a terrible place to live, with all those dreadful people about. For his part he was wholly satisfied to remain right where he was, and he hoped that Danny didn't have any foolish thoughts of going back to the Green Meadows,

Danny sat up and stroked his whiskers thoughtfully, while a shrewd little twinkle crept into his eyes and danced there. "Cousin Nibbler," said he, "I am not only thinking of going back to the Green Meadows, but I'm going. I'm going to start right away, and Nanny is going with me. We've had a comfortable and happy Winter here and we've enjoyed having you for a neighbor, but now that Mistress Spring is here we are homesick. That's the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We are just plain homesick. If you knew the Green Meadows as we, do you never would call them a dreadful place. No siree! Why, there's no place so beautiful in all the Great World:

"There's blue sky overhead, with jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun shining down by day and Mistress Moon by night. There's air, lots of it, soft and sweet. Here it is stuffy and dusty. You don't know what good air is. There is cool, beautiful green grass everywhere. There are sweet-smelling flowers and a million pleasant sounds—the songs of birds, the hum of bees, the rustling of leaves, the whispering of the Merry Little Breezes. They are worth all the dangers and more. After all, the dangers are a good thing. They keep our wits sharpened, and you know there is nothing like sharp wits to get you along in the world. I tell you what, Nibbler, you come back with us and see what real life is like."

STORY 1615. April 14, 1917

Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse Start Home

"I couldn't think of such a thing! I really couldn't! It is very nice of you to invite me, Cousin Danny, but I—I—"

"You are afraid," chuckled Danny Meadow Mouse. "Be honest, Nibbler. Be honest. You are afraid, and that is all there is to it."

Nibbler the House Mouse tried to look dignified and insulted, but his whiskers were twitching so nervously that he couldn't. He was afraid, and he knew that Danny knew that he was afraid. You see, Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse, who had spent the Winter in Farmer Brown's barn with their cousin, Nibbler, who lives there all the time, had grown homesick for the beautiful Green Meadows now that it was Spring, and had announced that they were going back there. Danny had invited Nibbler to go along with them, and the very idea of such a thing had quite upset Nibbler.

Perhaps if Danny had not made so light of the dangers in the barn compared with the dangers on the Green Meadows it might have been different. It always seemed to Nibbler that with Black Pussy hunting in the barn every day his life was quite as dangerous as any life could be. But Danny Meadow Mouse had laughed at Black

Pussy and had told him of the much smarter hunters of the Green Meadows, and how they had to be watched for every minute day and night. Nibbler couldn't understand how Danny and Nanny could even want to think of going back to such a dreadfully dangerous place.

But they not only thought of going: they actually were going. It would be a long, long journey with dreadful dangers all the way. Privately Nibbler thought that Danny and Nanny were simply crazy. The idea of leaving such a comfortable, comparatively safe place as Farmer Brown's barn for such dreadful dangers! No one in his senses would think of such a thing. You see Nibbler always had lived in that barn and that made all the difference in the world.

"I'm sorry you won't go along with us," continued Danny. "We would show you what real life is. And we would have all sorts of adventures. You have no idea what fun it is to fool Reddy Fox when he is sure that he is going to catch you."

Nibbler shivered but said nothing. "And there are such nice fresh things to eat out there. Why, you don't know what fresh food is, Cousin Nibbler," Danny went on. "You like the dried strawberries you find in the hay here, but you ought to taste a fresh, ripe strawberry. And it is such fun to hunt crickets in the grass! Better change your mind and come with us."

But Nibbler said no and urged them not to go. He might as well have talked to a stone wall. The Green Meadows were calling Danny and Nanny and go they must and would. Nibbler went with them as far as the door into the barnyard. Even then he was terribly nervous and kept looking behind and on all sides for Black Pussy and jumping at every little sound.

"Goodbye," said he. "It has been perfectly splendid having you here all Winter, and it is going to be very lonely. I hope you'll come back next Winter." He said this very wistfully.

"Goodbye," replied Danny. "Take care of yourself and watch out for Black Pussy. I wish you would come with us, but if you won't, you won't. We've had a fine Winter here, and perhaps we'll come back again. Goodbye."

Danny darted out into the barnyard. Nanny said goodbye and followed right at his heels. Nibbler watched them scurrying across the barnyard, and then his heart jumped right up in his mouth. There was Black Pussy just coming around the corner of the barn and she had seen Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse!

STORY 1616. April 16, 1917.

The Adventures of Danny and Nanny Begin.

Watch out, Danny! Watch out, Nanny!
Little folks as small as you
Never, never ought to wander
Far from home the way you do.

Illustrations. April 9 to April 14, 1917.

1610. Bobby Coon's Nearest Neighbor
"I think," said he, "that I'll follow this ledge and see if there are any more caves like mine."

1611. Buster Bear Finds Bobby Coon
"Who are you in there, anyway?" demanded the deep, grumbly rumbly voice.

1612. Why Bobby Coon Decided to Stay
Buster was fast asleep.

1613. Bobby Coon Discovers a New Neighbor
Then he took to his heels, too scared to even look over his shoulder."

1614. Danny Meadow Mouse Listens to a Call
"Not exciting enough!" squeaked Nibbler. "My goodness, Cousin Danny!"

1615. Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse Start Home
"Goodbye," replied Danny. "Take care of yourself and watch out for Black Pussy."

Timid Nibbler the House Mouse opened his mouth to shriek a warning to Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse as they scampered across Farmer Brown's barnyard at the very beginning of their long journey back to their old home on the Green Meadows after spending the Winter in Farmer Brown's barn. But Timid Nibbler was too frightened to make a sound. There was Black Pussy just coming around the corner of the barn, and though he wanted to warn his two adventurous cousins of their danger, the very sight of Black Pussy took away his voice. It is just that way with some timid people. So all Nibbler could do was to peep out of the door with horror in his eyes and watch what might happen.

Now, never in his whole life had Nibbler dared cross a great, open space like that barnyard. His whole life had been spent inside that barn and seldom had he ever ventured more than a few feet from a safe hiding place. When in the dead of night, he had scampered swiftly across the barn floor he had felt very brave and bold. But to go out in the open as Danny and Nanny were doing, and in broad daylight at that, was to Nibbler's little mind nothing sort of craziness. He had done his very best to get them to give up the idea of that long journey, and to stay with him in the barn. But they WOULD go. Danny had laughed at Nibbler's fears. And now here at the very start his worst fears were likely to be realized. At least that is the way it looked to Nibbler.

But Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse were brought up out under the sky instead of under a roof, and that made all the difference in the world. All their lives they had been used to unexpected dangers, and they were not caught napping now. Danny had seen Black Pussy even before Nibbler had. Also before he had left the barn Danny had decided just where he was going. On the other side of the barnyard was a pile of old rails. It was straight for these that Danny was headed. The instant he saw Black Pussy, and that was before she saw him, he squeaked a warning to Nanny Meadow Mouse at his heels. My, how their little, short legs did take them over the ground! Their short, stubby tails were straight out behind, as if they were pointing at Black Pussy as much as to say, "You can't catch us if you try."

They were not quite halfway across the barnyard when Black Pussy caught sight of them. With a bound she was after them, and how she did run! Nibbler, peeping out from the doorway of the barn, held his breath with horror as he saw that one more jump would bring Black Pussy on Nanny, and perhaps Danny, too, for Nanny was right at Danny's heels. Then, as Black Pussy made that jump, something happened. Yes, sir; something happened. Danny Meadow Mouse hadn't dodged enemies all his life for nothing. Just at the very instant Black Pussy made that spring Danny squeaked a warning to Nanny and dodged to the left, while Nanny dodged to the right,

Black Pussy landed between them, her sharp claws clutching nothing at all but the ground. For just an instant she was too surprised to know what to do next. You see, she had been absolutely sure that she would catch at least one of those fat mice. Then for another instant she was undecided which one to chase. This was exactly what Danny had counted on. By the time Black Pussy had made up her mind that she would chase Danny, both he and Nanny were very near the pile of old rails. Two seconds later Danny and Nanny were safe and Black Pussy was wildly clawing under those old rails in angry disappointment, while in the doorway of the barn Nibbler was hugging

himself in joy and relief.

"Cousin Danny certainly knows how to look out for himself," squeaked Nibbler, as he scurried back to his home in the haymow. "Just the same, I'm glad I didn't go with them."

STORY 1617. April 17, 1917.

More Adventures.

"Phew! Seems like old times, doesn't it, Nanny?" panted Danny Meadow Mouse as safe under the pile of old rails in Farmer Brown's barnyard they listened to Black Pussy's growl of disappointment at she felt around for them with a black paw. Then he chuckled. "I feel as if life had begun all over again, Nanny," said he. "It was too tame there in that barn."

"But it was very nice not to have to worry all the time," replied Nanny timidly.

"So it was, so it was," Danny answered. "But if we lived that way long, we wouldn't be worth a flip of my tall for looking out for ourselves in times of danger. You know, it is only by using them that wits are kept sharp. And then what a place to bring up children in that barn would be! Why, they never would learn anything there. Everyone to his own place, and our place is in the grass of the beautiful Green Meadows, under the blue, blue sky. Now we've got to give that pesky black trouble-maker the slip. There is one thing sure and that is that we have learned a lot about Black Pussy since we have been up here. She'll sit and watch the place where we ran in and never once think that we may leave some other way. Getting away from here is going to be easy."

For a while Danny and Nanny kept perfectly still, resting and getting their breath. Then, taking care not to make the teeniest, weeniest sound, Danny peeped out. Just as he expected, there sat Black Pussy with her eyes fixed on the place where Danny and Nanny had disappeared under the pile of old rails. Down inside Danny chuckled. Then he signaled Nanny and they tip-toed where they could tip-toe and crawled where they had to crawl until they reached the other side of the pile of old rails, and not once did they make a sound to reach the ears of Black Pussy. Danny peeped out. The way seemed clear and he boldly scampered out, Nanny right at his heels. Both laughed as they thought of Black Pussy patiently watching on the other side of that pile of rails. Straight to the nearest fence they scampered, for Danny had learned when he was very young that it is along fences that tall weeds and bushes grow and that grass is not cut but grows tall and then when cold weather comes falls over and makes a matted tangle under which a Meadow. Mouse often can travel far without once being seen by watchful eyes above.

It was a long, long journey they had before them. Danny knew that. It wouldn't have seemed long to you or to me, but to such little folks as Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse it was a very long journey indeed. So they wisely decided not to hurry too fast. In fact, they stopped to rest very, very often. They would scamper along a few feet,

then stop under cover of a mass of old dead grass while Danny looked and listened and listened and looked to make sure that the way was clear for the next run.

It was one of these times while they were resting that there was a sudden snuffing sound that sent cold shivers all over them. It was Bowser the Hound, who happened along just then and stopped to sniff in the very patch of grass under which they were hiding. You know it is Bowser's way to sniff at everything as he goes along.

"Quick!" cried Danny, and darted out from under the grass and into a little hole among the roots of a tree. Nanny followed and there they panted with excitement as Bowser clumsily tried to dig them out and couldn't because of the roots. Bowser didn't really want them. He just tried to catch them for the fun of it, and when he found he couldn't he soon gave up and trotted off. As soon as they were sure he was out of the way they started on.

Presently they came to a little open place among the bushes along the fence and Danny started to scamper across. Just in the nick of time he saw something that made him turn and run back so suddenly that he ran right into Nanny and knocked her over.

"What is it?" asked Nanny anxiously.

"Mr. Blacksnake taking a sunbath," whispered Danny, his teeth chattering with fright. Don't make a sound, Nanny, not a sound!"

STORY 1618. April 18, 1917.

Which Was Lost?

For a long minute Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse stared out at the sunny place among the bushes beside the fence where Mr. Blacksnake lay sunning himself. It had been a narrow escape, a very narrow escape, indeed. It had been such a narrow escape that Danny was still trembling so that his funny little short tail shook. You know he had almost run right into Mr. Blacksnake. It was lucky, very lucky, for Danny that that Mr. Blacksnake was asleep at the time. Danny could hardly believe even now that Mr. Blacksnake hadn't heard him as he scampered back so suddenly that he knocked Nanny Meadow Mouse I over. But Mr. Blacksnake hadn't, and as soon as Danny and Nanny were sure I of this they began to breathe easier. Then they stopped shaking.

"What shall we do?" whispered Nanny.

"Get away from here as fast as our legs will take us," Danny whispered back.

"Shall we go the way we have come?" asked Nanny.

"No," replied Danny promptly. "We are going home to the Green Meadows in spite of Mr. Blacksnake and every other danger that ever was or ever will be. Now you follow me and mind that you keep right at my heels."

"Nanny promised that she would, and Danny led the way out into the open in order to go around Mr. Blacksnake. He took good care, did Danny, to go a long way around, for he is much afraid of Mr. Blacksnake and he intended to take no chance that Mr.

Blacksnake might wake up and see them. Perhaps this was the wisest thing to do, but it was also a dangerous thing to do. You see it meant leaving the safe cover of the bushes and grass along the fence and going right out where there was nothing at all to hide them. They had safely passed the place where Mr. Blacksnake lay and were heading back toward the fence again when Danny caught sight of a shadow sweeping across the ground. Now a shadow wouldn't frighten you or me, but Danny's heart jumped right up in his throat at sight of that shadow. He didn't have to look up in the air to know the shadow of everyone who flies over the Green Meadows and of every one who walks there. He has made it his business to know shadows and all about them.

"Redtail the Hawk!" squeaked Danny. "Run, Nanny, run for cover!"

Then Danny and Nanny did just as they had done when Black Pussy so nearly caught them—they separated. Danny darted straight ahead for the fence-row as fast as his short legs could be made to go. Nanny darted off to one side, dodged, and crept under some old cornstalks she had seen. Redtail hesitated just a wee second, undecided which one to try to catch. That one wee second gave Danny just time enough to reach the bushes along the fence and Redtail's great claws closed on nothing, though the tip of one actually scratched Danny. With a scream of disappointment Redtail swung up into the air on his broad wings, and there he sailed in circles watching below. He had seen where Nanny had gone and he hoped to get her when she should venture out.

Now Danny hadn't seen where Nanny had gone and Nanny hadn't seen just what happened to Danny. She had to stay a long time under those cornstalks before Redtail finally gave up and she could safely get across to the fence-row. When she got there, she could find no sign of Danny. You see he had run some distance both ways along the fencerow looking for Nanny and then decided that she must have gone ahead thinking that she was behind him. So at last, he had hurried on hoping to catch up.

And all the time he kept saying over and over: "Nanny's lost. Poor Nanny. She never can find her way alone. What will she do without me?" And right that very time Nanny was hunting for Danny and saying over and over to herself: "Danny's lost. I know he is. Perhaps I'll never, never, see him again. He's lost! I know he's lost!"

STORY 1619. April 19, 1917.

Danny Meadow Mouse is Terribly Worried.

Fee, fi, fo, Danny!
What's become of little Nanny?

If Danny Meadow Mouse could have answered that it would have saved him a lot of gray hairs. At least, that is what he says. You know worry is supposed to turn the hair gray. But as Danny is rather gray anyway, I cannot see how worrying could possibly have made any difference in this respect. He did worry. There is no doubt about that. In fact, he worried more than ever he had worried before in all his life.

You see, Danny hadn't the least idea what had become of Nanny. He hadn't seen her dodge under the old cornstalks when Redtail the Hawk swooped at them. He had

been too busy saving his own skin to see what Nanny was doing. At first, he feared that Redtail had caught her. But when he got to thinking it over he remembered that Redtail had tried to catch him and had come uncomfortably near to doing it. Of course, he couldn't have caught Nanny, not then, anyway. But if he hadn't caught her what could have become of her? She must have reached the shelter of the bushes and grass along that fence to a different point from where he had. Thinking she might be somewhere head of him, Danny hurried along as fast as he could, but when he had gone a long way and found no trace of her, he just had to make up his mind that Nanny was lost.

It was a dreadful situation. It certainly was. When they had started out from farmer Brown's barn on the long journey back to their beloved Green Meadows it hadn't once entered Danny's head that they might become separated. He had known that there would be all sorts of dangers. A Meadow Mouse never can take even a short journey without running the risk of danger, and on such a long journey as this there would be all sorts of dangers. But Danny had great confidence in himself, and self-confidence is a splendid thing. He felt absolutely sure that he could take care of himself, and Nanny, too. And now, before he was half-way home, Nanny was lost.

"If she hasn't been caught by somebody already she surely will be," moaned Danny. "And it's all my fault. I ought never to have taken her away from the safety of that barn. What does she know about the dangers of the Great World? If Redtail the Hawk hasn't got her Reddy or Granny Fox or Old Man Coyote will get her. She doesn't know how to take care of herself. She doesn't even know the way home."

Danny quite forgot that he was only guessing at the way home himself.

"I always knew I loved her dearly," he went on, "but I didn't know how much until now. If anything does happen to her, and I'm sure something will, I just don't want to live. I'll let Reddy Fox catch me. That's what I'll do. But I won't do it just yet. I'll make sure first that I'm never going to see Nanny again.

"I hate Redtail!" he broke out fiercely. "I hate him! I hate him! I hate him! But for him I wouldn't have lost my Nanny. Whatever will she do without me to take care of her? Whatever will she do?"

And so Danny worried and worried. He lost his appetite. He was too worried to eat. He was undecided what to do. He would go back a little way, then change his mind and race ahead, only to do it all over again. And so he tired himself out so that at last, he just had to find a hiding place and lie down. But even then, for a long time he couldn't get to sleep. He kept thinking of all the terrible things that might have happened to Nanny Meadow Mouse. It never once entered Danny's funny little head that Nanny was anything but helpless. He thought of her just as if she were one of his babies, with no knowledge of the Great World, when the truth was that Nanny was quite as smart as Danny and a lot more careful.

STORY 1620. April 20, 1917.

Danny Cannot Bear to Go Home.

Danny Meadow Mouse slept. It took him a long time to go to sleep but go to sleep he did at last. But even then, he could not get rid of his worry about Nanny Meadow Mouse. It bothered him in the form of dreadful dreams. He dreamed he saw Nanny running from Reddy Fox, caught by Old Man Coyote, carried away by Redtail the Hawk. And always, in the dream you know, it was through some fault of his that such dreadful things happened to Nanny. He dreamed that he heard Nanny crying because she was lost, and though he did his best to find her he couldn't. So he dreamed and dreamed, and when at last he awoke he did not feel at all rested.

It was night. For a few minutes Danny lay still and tried to think how he came to be there and what had happened. Then it all came back to him how he had lost Nanny Meadow Mouse. He scrambled to his feet. He would go on at once. That it was night made no difference. He could travel by night quite as well as by day. In fact, there were, if anything, fewer dangers. But the farther Danny got the harder it was to think of returning to his old home on the Green Meadows without Nanny. Her absence would be harder to bear than ever. Without her it wouldn't be home at all.

He was so busy thinking about Nanny and how life without her wouldn't be worth living that he grew heedless, and it was just by luck, pure luck, that he escaped Reddy Fox, who was hunting along that very fence. As it was, he saw Reddy only just in time.

So quite out of breath with both fright and hard running Danny drew nearer and nearer to that part of the Green Meadows where he had once lived before he had moved to Farmer Brown's cornfield and been carried to Farmer Brown's barn in a shock of corn[21]. On the edge of the cornfield, he stopped. The field was bare now save for the stubs of the cornstalks, but it looked very familiar and made the ache in Danny's heart twice as hard. He stopped. He couldn't go any farther.

"I can't do it. I can't. I can't go home without Nanny," said he. "I know what I'll do. I'll go back to where I lost her. If I don't find her or what became of her, I'll never, never, never go back to our old home on the Green Meadows. It would only make me think of her more and I just couldn't stand it. I wish I had somebody to help me hunt for her. I'll rest a bit and then I'll go back."

So Danny found a place where he could curl up in safety and this time, because he really was quite worn out with his hurry and worry, he promptly went to sleep and slept without dreaming. When he awoke jolly, round, red Mr. Sun was just beginning his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky, the birds were beginning to sing, Old Mother West Wind was coming down the Purple Hills with her bag full of children, the Merry Little Breezes, and the soft Spring air seemed to be filled with the spirit of happiness—happiness for everyone but Danny Meadow Mouse. For a few minutes he hesitated, then he turned back away from the Green Meadows. He simply couldn't go back home without Nanny. He couldn't do it.

STORY 1621. April 21, 1917.

What Nanny Meadow Mouse Was Doing.

21 STORY 1505, 1916.

Pray, always independent be
And on your own feet firmly stand:
Your eyes, your ears, your wits are yours,
For just one purpose—self-command.

No one who depends on others to see for him or hear for him or act for him, and so does just what others may tell him to do without knowing at all whether what he is doing may be best or not, hasn't self-command. To have real command of self is to be truly independent.

Now, Danny Meadow Mouse had for so long regarded himself as the head of the family that he had grown to think that Nanny Meadow Mouse would be quite helpless without him, a mistake which a great many heads of families make. He thought that Nanny did everything just as he said, and Nanny let him think so, when, truth to tell, it was more often that Danny did as Nanny desired.

You see, Nanny is a very smart and clever little person, and she long ago learned that to have her own way it was best to lead Danny to think it was his way. So she pretended to be very dependent on Danny, and made him think her quite helpless without him, when all the time she knew how to use her eyes and her ears and her nose and her wits quite as well as Danny could use his. If Danny had realized this, he would have been saved a great deal of worry when he and Nanny were separated by Redtail the Hawk.

When Redtail had swooped at them Nanny had dodged under some cornstalks, while Danny had kept on to the bushes and grass along the fence, and so both escaped. But Redtail had sailed around and around overhead for a long time, and not until he finally gave up and flew away did Nanny dare hurry across to the fencerow where Danny had disappeared. By the time she got there, there was no sign of Danny. Not knowing what had become of her, for he had not seen her dodge under those cornstalks, he had hurried on thinking that she might be ahead of him.

When Nanny had called and called in her funny little squeaky voice and received no answer she sat down to think things over.

"Probably he has gone on thinking I am ahead of him," thought she, after her first fright and worry. "If he doesn't find me, as of course he won't, he'll keep on to our old home and wait for me there. I'm not going to worry about him any more than I can help. Danny is quite able to take care of himself. I'll just follow right along, and if he should turn back to look for me, I'll meet him."

So Nanny started on, and, because she knew that the journey would be long, she didn't run her legs off, as Danny in his anxiety about her was doing to his short legs. After a while she peeped out on the other side of the fencerow, and right across a lane was another fencerow. There were more bushes and grass than along the fence where she was. Nanny looked this way and looked that way to make sure that all was safe, then she darted across the lane to the other fencerow and continued on her way. So it happened that she went right past the place where, in the opposite fencerow, Danny was taking a nap. And so, too, of course, Danny found no trace of her nor she of him.

But while he worried himself almost sick, she didn't let herself worry very much. She felt entirely able to take care of herself, and equally sure that Danny could take care of himself. She simply looked forward to finding Danny in their old home and hurried on.

STORY 1622. April 23, 1917

Danny Meets Peter Rabbit

Give a little sympathy
When you see the need.
You will find your own reward
In a kindly deed.

Danny Meadow Mouse was hurrying back toward the place where he had been parted from Nanny Meadow Mouse. He just couldn't bear to go to their old home without her, and so he had turned around and was going back. He was so sure that something must have happened to her and that he never, never would see her again that tears were in his eyes, and he didn't half see where he was going. The result was that he ran plump into Peter Rabbit. It is a question which was the most startled.

"O" cried Peter, jumping straight up in the air and all ready to run the instant he touched the ground again. Then he saw who it was and he fairly shouted. That is, he shouted as loud as Peter can shout, which isn't loud at all. "Danny Meadow Mouse!" he cried. "Danny Meadow Mouse! Let me feel of you and see if it really is you! Where under the sun have you been all Winter? I thought something dreadful must have happened to you long ago. No one seemed to know anything about you. Everybody has supposed that Shadow the Weasel gobbled you up long ago. Where have you been? What have you been doing? Why haven't we seen you before? O, but I am glad to see you now! You have no idea how you have been missed. Where is Nanny Meadow Mouse?"

At the mention of Nanny the tears in Danny's eyes overflowed. "That's what I want to know, Peter," he sobbed. "Haven't you seen her anywhere?"

"No," said Peter, "I haven't seen her anywhere, but then I haven't been where I would be likely to see her. I had just reached this fencerow when you came bumping into me and scared me half to death."

Danny had to smile through his tears. In spite of his trouble, he was tickled at the idea of having frightened one so much bigger than himself. Peter saw the smile and chuckled himself as if he thought it a great joke, as indeed he did.

"If anyone had told me that you would or could make me jump almost out of my skin I wouldn't have believed it," said he. "But you did, and now to pay for it you have got to tell me all about your troubles, Danny Meadow Mouse. Now, what has happened to Nanny and when did it happen? Begin at the beginning and tell me all about it."

Danny began to tell how Redtail the Hawk had separated them, but Peter interrupted. "That isn't the beginning or anywhere near the beginning, Danny Meadow

Illustrations. April 16 to April 21, 1917.

1616. The Adventures of Danny and Nanny Begin.
Black Pussy was wildly clawing under those old rails.

1617. More Adventures.
"Mr. Blacksnake is taking a sun bath," whispered Danny.

1618. Which Was Lost?
"Nanny's lost. Poor Nanny. She never can find her way alone."

1619. Danny Meadow Mouse is Terribly Worried.
"I hate Redtail!" he broke out fiercely. "I hate him!"

1620. Danny Cannot Bear to Go Home.
As it was, he saw Reddy only just in time.

1621. What Nanny Meadow Mouse Was Doing.
"Probably he has gone on, thinking I am ahead of him," thought she.

Mouse," said he severely. "Where were you all Winter? Begin with the time you left your old home on the Green Meadows."

So, because he saw there was no way out of it, Danny began at the beginning and told Peter how he and Nanny had moved to the cornfield and made a new home in a cornshock; how Farmer Brown and his boy had come and carried the corn away in a wagon, taking Danny and Nanny with it; how they had spent a happy and comfortable Winter in Farmer Brown's barn; how with the coming of sweet Mistress Spring they had grown homesick for the Green Meadows; how they had started on the long journey back, and finally how they had been separated, and he, Danny, didn't know what had become of Nanny. Peter listened with eyes stretched wide in wonder at Danny's strange tale, but when he reached the part about the parting with Nanny, then Peter forgot everything but Danny's trouble and a great desire to help him.

"Stop your worrying, Danny," said he "Nanny is quite able to take care of herself, and I'm going to help you find her."

"Will you, Peter? O, will you?" cried Danny. "You've made me feel better already. You can't think how much better you have made me feel."

STORY 1623. April 24, 1917

Peter Looks for Nanny Meadow Mouse

"The greatest fun of which I know
Is helping others as I go."

So said Peter Rabbit as he hurried about this way and that way, lipperty- lipperty lip, looking for Nanny Meadow Mouse. Danny Meadow Mouse still persisted in going back to the place where Redtail the Hawk had so nearly caught him and been the cause of losing Nanny, so Peter went in the opposite direction back toward the cornfield, though Danny was sure that this was quite useless. And as he hopped this way and that way he took the greatest care not to overlook any place in which Nanny could be hidden or anything under which she might have crept for a nap.

Now, no one can go about looking into this and under that without awakening curiosity in those who happen to see him. It wasn't long before Sammy Jay happened along.

"What under the sun are you hunting for now, Peter?" he demanded.

"Nanny Meadow Mouse," replied Peter, without stopping even for a minute looking here and peering there.

"Nanny Meadow Mouse!" exclaimed Sammy. "I guess you will have one good, long hunt, Peter. Didn't you know that she and Danny disappeared at the very beginning of the Winter and haven't been seen since?"

"O, yes, they have," retorted Peter, with a provoking grin. "At least Danny has, for I talked with him only a few minutes ago. Now I'm trying to help him find Nanny.

He lost her yesterday or she lost him, I don't know which. You've got as sharp eyes as I know of, Sammy, so why don't you try to be a good fellow and help look for Nanny. Danny's heart is about broken."

Sammy listened to all this in the greatest surprise. He looked at Peter in a very sharp way which he has to make sure that Peter meant what he said, and he saw that Peter was very much in earnest. But like everybody else on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest, Sammy had supposed all Winter that Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse were dead, and it was very hard for him to believe just on Peter's word that they were not.

Peter saw the look and understood it. He chuckled. "You don't believe it, do you, Sammy?" said he. "I don't blame you. Just fly along up this fencerow and if your eyes are as sharp as I think they are you will see Danny himself. They spent the Winter in Farmer Brown's barn and that is the reason we haven't seen them or known what had become of them. They were on their way to their old home on the Green Meadows when Redtail the Hawk tried to catch them, and they became separated. Now Danny won't go home without Nanny. He says it wouldn't be home without her, and he can't bear to even see it. So I'm trying to find Nanny for him. You know I'm very fond of Danny."

"So is Reddy Fox," sniffed Sammy. "Still, for Danny's sake, I wouldn't ad- vise you to tell Reddy that Danny has come back."

Peter grinned. "No danger," said he, "But this isn't finding Nanny. Are you going to help, Sammy? If you start looking for her, she is as good as found. I haven't forgotten how you found Mr. Quack for poor Mrs. Quack last Spring[22]." That settled the matter so far as Sammy was concerned. He is so often blamed for things that to have someone praise him always makes him willing to do almost anything.

"Of course," said he. "Give my regards to Danny and tell him to stop worrying." Off Sammy flew, and Peter once more began to hunt for Nanny Meadow Mouse.

STORY 1624. April 25, 1917

Sammy Jay Brings Danny a Message

Peter Rabbit felt as if Nanny Meadow Mouse was almost as good as found. "I've got a pair of the sharpest eyes of which I know looking for her, and back of those eyes are wits as sharp and clever as any on all the Green Meadows or in all the Green Forest. If Sammy Jay can't find her, then something surely has happened to her," said Peter to himself as he hopped this way and that way from bush to bush and bunch of grass to bunch of grass looking for Nanny Meadow Mouse.

What Peter said about Sammy was quite true. His eyes and his wits are of the sharpest. Furthermore, there is nothing he so enjoys as using them. He dearly loves to try to find out the secrets of others. It isn't so much mischief that leads him to go spying and snooping around as it is the love of testing his eyes and his wits against those of

22 STORY 1300, 1916.

his neighbors. So when Peter Rabbit told him about Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse he made up his mind even before Peter suggested it that he would find Nanny. When he left Peter down near the cornfield Sammy flew over to the Big Hickory tree to do a little thinking.

Now right there is one great difference between Peter Rabbit and Sammy Jay. Peter thinks backward and Sammy thinks ahead. By that I mean that Peter does things as they pop into his head and then later looks back and thinks how he might have done differently and much better. This is what is called being im-pul-sive. Sammy Jay doesn't do things this way. It is very, very seldom that Sammy is im-pul-sive. He does a lot of thinking before he acts. He plans ahead. So while Peter Rabbit is forever heedlessly poking his wabbly little nose into trouble Sammy Jay usually manages to avoid it.

Now, Peter started looking for Nanny Meadow Mouse without any real plan at all. He got as far as the edge of the cornfield, decided it was of no use to look there, and turned back the way he had come just as Danny Meadow Mouse had done. Sammy Jay first flew to the Big Hickory Tree and quietly thought the whole thing over.

"What would I have done if I had been in Nanny's place?" thought he. "I might have worried a little about Danny, but I would have known that he was quite able to take care of himself. As soon as I knew that he couldn't be found I would start for my old home. That would be the sensible thing to do. That is just what Nanny has done. That is where she and Danny had started for and she has gone straight there, thinking that Danny will have sense enough to do the same thing."

Sammy spread his blue wings and started straight for the place where Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse used to live on the Green Meadows. He didn't waste any time looking for Nanny on the way. When he got there, he flew very low, so as to see better. Presently he saw a little movement of tangled dead grass. Sammy's eyes danced.

"Welcome back to the Green Meadows, Nanny Meadow Mouse!" he cried.

There was no answer, nor did the grass move again. Sammy flew down and alighted close by. His eyes twinkled as he said:

"Danny Meadow Mouse is breaking his heart because he is sure that he never, never will see you again."

This time he got a reply promptly. "You tell Danny Meadow Mouse that he never will if he hasn't got sense enough to come home!" said a sharp, squeaky voice.

Sammy laughed right out. "All right. I'll tell him just that," said he, and once more spread his blue wings. And Sammy was as good as his word. He took that message to Danny just as it had been given him.

STORY 1625. April 26, 1917

Home at Last

O, sing a song of home, my dear;
Of home and nothing more.
No other place so precious is
The whole, great, wide world o'er.

It doesn't matter in the least how plain and simple it is if it be truly home. No one has a more modest home than Danny Meadow Mouse. A great many people would turn up their noses at it. But to Danny and to Nanny Meadow Mouse it is the most beautiful place in all the Great World and they would not change with anyone. No, sir; they wouldn't. Danny says so. Nanny says so. Both mean it.

Just how beautiful and precious it is Danny never fully realized until he thought he never would see it again. You know he had made up his mind that he never, never would go back there again without Nanny, whom he had lost on the way back there from Farmer Brown's barn. So when Sammy Jay brought him a message from Nanny saving that he never would see her again unless he had sense enough to come home, Danny didn't stop long enough to be polite and thank Sammy. He just started off as fast as his short legs would take him. Sammy understood and simply laughed.

Danny was in such a hurry that he was reckless. Yes, sir; Danny was reckless. He was in such a hurry to get home to see Nanny once more that he hurried along without any effort to keep out of sight. It was lucky, very lucky for Danny that none of his enemies happened to be about just then. If they had I am afraid Danny never would have reached home.

But as it was nothing happened, and at last, out of breath, so tired that he was almost ready to drop, Danny Meadow Mouse reached the place in the Green Meadows where his old home had been, and followed one of his familiar private little paths straight to where he and Nanny had built their house of grass long before they moved to the cornshock in Farmer Brown's cornfield. Danny didn't expect to find anything of that old house left. In fact, he didn't expect to find any house. Just imagine how surprised he was to find a new house already half built.

"Well," said a squeaky little voice, "it's about time you came home! Where have you been, I should like to know?"

At the sound of that voice a great lump crept up into Danny's throat, a lump of joy. "O, Nanny!" was all he could say.

Of course, it was Nanny's voice he had heard. A minute later she peeped out from the half-built house. There was a twinkle in her bright eyes, but she took pains that Danny shouldn't see it. She pretended to be indignant. "Well, sir!" said she. "You don't care how I worry, do you? You are quite ready to leave all the work to You don't care anything about my feelings. You might think just a little bit of your wife."

Poor Danny! He didn't know what to say. He blinked at Nanny with such a funny look on his face that she had hard work not to laugh. And then, too, she just longed to run out and hug him. At last he found his voice.

"I—I've been hunting for you all this time, Nanny," said he meekly. "I've worried

myself almost sick. I—I—Don't be cross, Nanny."

For answer, Nanny ran out and did hug him. "You silly Danny!" she cried. "You thought I couldn't take care of myself. You didn't have sense enough to come home, because you thought I couldn't find my way here. As soon as I knew I couldn't find you I said to myself that the thing to do was to go straight home, and Danny will do the same thing. But you didn't. I did the sensible thing and you didn't. Now, Danny Meadow Mouse, perhaps you will give me credit for knowing a little something. See, I've begun our new house! Isn't it good to be back home again?"

"The best thing in all the world as long as you are here!" declared Danny. And then Nanny made him curl up in the half-built house to rest while she brought more grass to finish it with.

STORY 1626. April 27, 1917

The House in the Old Pasture

There are houses in bushes and houses in trees:
  There are ugly houses and houses that please:
But of all the houses I ever have found,
  There are none that are safer than those underground.

Just as soon as the frost was out of the ground so that they could dig, Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy, who, you remember, was beautiful Miss Swiftfoot before she became Mrs. Reddy, went to work up in the Old Pasture to make their house. You see, they were very anxious to begin housekeeping as soon as possible. You remember that they had searched every nook and corner of the Old Pasture and finally had decided on a little opening among the bushes, where on a gentle slope the sun lay warm most of the day and where they could dig down under a big rock in such a way that if they should be so unlucky as to be discovered by Farmer Brown's boy he couldn't possibly dig them out.

Reddy Fox didn't have much to say about the plans for that new house. He was quite willing to leave them to Mrs. Reddy. He wanted above all things that she should be pleased and satisfied. So he did what she told him to, in spite of the fact that it seemed to him that she was going to a great deal of unnecessary work. Reddy isn't any too fond of work. He would have been quite content with a hall half as long and a bedroom half as big as Mrs. Reddy insisted on. He would have been quite content with one back door. In fact, he said as much. Mr. Reddy's only reply was to kick a pawful of sand behind her just enough harder to strike Reddy full in the face as he watched her dig. Reddy didn't say another word. He brushed the sand out of his hair and sat down out of range. When Mrs. Reddy wanted to rest she backed out and Reddy, looking a bit sheepish, took her place and made the yellow sand fly. He knew that Mrs. Reddy had made up her mind how that house was to be and that was all there was to it.

So Reddy bravely did his share, though it seemed a terrible waste of good time and hard work. When they were too tired to dig longer, they would take a sun bath or a

nap on the warm, sunny slope, or they would go hunting. Then they would come back to work with new joy in what they were doing. It was more real work than Reddy ever had done in his life before, but was it not to be his own, his very own, house and home? The very thought turned the work into fun, real fun.

And so at last the new house in the Old Pasture was finished and it was made just as Mrs. Reddy wanted it. Before the front was a mound of yellow sand. It told the story of what was there to whoever happened along that way. But that couldn't be helped.

The sand had to come out or there could be no house, and Reddy and Mrs. Reddy had no means of carrying that sand away as Striped Chipmunk does when he makes a new house. They have no pockets in their checks. But there were two back doors, and in front of these there wasn't a trace of tell-tale yellow sand. No, sir, there wasn't a trace of yellow sand. Those two back doors opened among the bushes back of the big rock in front of which Reddy and Mrs. Reddy had begun digging. One of them opened close under a little bush and the other opened back of a bramble tangle. They were not as big as the front door. They were only Just big enough to slip through.

You see, they were not intended for use except in time of danger. And the reason there was no tell-tale yellow sand in front of them was because Mrs. Reddy had started those back halls that led to those back doors from inside the house and had pushed the sand behind her, then out the front door. O, Reddy and Mrs. Reddy are very clever, very clever, indeed. And they believe in preparedness. They were not expecting any danger in their house, but if it should come, they would have a way of slipping out and away unseen.

STORY 1627. April 28, 1917

Sammy Jay Becomes Suspicious

It's Sammy's nature to suspect
  All things he cannot understand,
And then to silent flit about
  And watch and peer on every hand.

There are many people just like Sammy Jay. It is a very bad habit. At least, most people think so. It is very apt to make trouble for others, especially if the one who goes peering and spying about isn't wise enough to guard his tongue and keep to himself the things he finds out, particularly if they be bad or unpleasant things. Sammy Jay rather prides himself on knowing when to talk and when to keep still. There are certain people Sammy delights in making trouble for. Reddy Fox is one of these. Sammy is never so happy as when he can spoil Reddy's hunting. There are others for whom he delights in doing a good turn. You remember how he found Mr. Quack for Mrs. Quack[23], and how he found Nanny Meadow Mouse for Danny Meadow Mouse[24]. And many a time he has given his neighbors warning of danger.

Of course, Sammy Jay was one of the first to know about Reddy and Mrs. Reddy.

23 STORY 1300, 1916.
24 STORY 1624.

He saw Reddy's great fight with the stranger fox up in the Old Pasture, with beautiful Miss Swiftfoot looking on, and he knew then that she would become Mrs. Reddy. There being nothing slow about Sammy, he guessed right away that sooner or later there would be a new house, for he knew that Reddy I would not take Mrs. Reddy home to live with old Granny Fox.

"They'll dig a new home either on the Green Meadows or in the Green Forest," thought Sammy. "I'll just keep my eyes open. I find it is a very good plan to know just where my neighbors live. There are times when the knowledge is very useful."

So as he went about his own affairs day after day Sammy kept his eyes open for signs of a new house, but without success. Often he saw Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy, sometimes on the Green Meadows, sometimes in the Green Forest, and always together. But after the arrival of sweet Mistress Spring there came a time when he seldom saw either of them. This was the time when they were so busy digging their new house up in the Old Pasture. Somehow Sammy hadn't once thought of looking up in the Old Pasture for that new house. He knew that Old Man Coyote lived there, and he knew that Reddy Fox had a great deal of respect for Old Man Coyote's strength and cunning, and it didn't once occur to Sammy that Reddy would for a minute think of making his home anywhere near that of Old Man Coyote. After a time, Sammy noticed that almost always when he met him Reddy Fox was alone. The first time Sammy didn't think anything about it, but after he had met Reddy alone several times and had noticed that Reddy was too intent on hunting to stop to gossip as he used to do, Sammy's sharp wits began to work. He began to grow suspicious. Yes, sir; Sammy began to grow suspicious. He went off where he could be quite by himself and there he sat down to think.

"Reddy and Mrs. Reddy have dug that new house," thought he. "There is no doubt about it. They have dug that new house, and I haven't the least idea where. Now, Reddy hunts alone most of the time, and he does a great deal more hunting than I ever knew him to do before at this time of year. There must be a reason for it. There is a reason for everything. He must be taking food home. If he is doing that it must be for someone besides himself. I think I'll take a day off and watch Reddy. I have an idea I may find out something interesting. That's what I'll do—I'll follow Reddy without letting him know it."

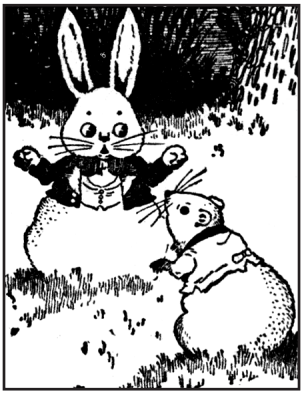
Sammy chuckled. Then he spread his blue wings and started to look for Reddy Fox.

STORY 1628. April 30, 1917

Sammy Jay Spies on Reddy Fox

Flitting here and flitting there
  Silently the livelong day.
Peering, prying, shrewdly spying.
  Is the way of Sammy Jay.

Illustrations. April 23 to April 28, 1917.



1622. Danny Meets Peter Rabbit
Peter listened with eyes stretched wide in wonder at Danny's strange tale.

1623. Peter Looks for Nanny Meadow Mouse
"You don't believe it, do you, Sammy?" said he.

1624. Sammy Jay Brings Danny a Message
Sammy laughed right out.

1625. Home at Last
"Well, sir," said she, "You don't care how I worry, do you?"

1626. The House in the Old Pasture
He brushed the sand out of his hair and sat down out of range.

1627. Sammy Jay Becomes Suspicious
Often he saw Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy

Of course, I do not mean that he is doing this all the time. But that is Sammy's way when he wants to find out something that no one will tell him. There isn't a more clever spy in all the Green Forest. And there isn't anyone who knows more about the affairs of other people. So when Sammy made up his mind that Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy had managed to dig a new house and keep it a secret, and when he noticed that Reddy was doing a great deal more hunting than there seemed any good reason for if he had only one stomach to keep full, he promptly decided that he would do a little spying just to satisfy his own curiosity. He had a feeling that he might discover something very interesting.

So the next time Sammy saw Reddy hunting on the Green Meadows he kept Reddy in sight, all the time pretending to be very busy hunting himself. He kept his tongue still and he kept as much out of sight as possible; but he managed to keep Reddy always in view. Reddy had very good luck that morning. Sammy was too far away to see what Reddy had caught, but presently Reddy started off as if bound straight for some particular place. Sammy chuckled to himself and followed, taking great care to keep just as far behind Reddy as possible and still keep him in sight. Reddy trotted along swiftly to the edge of the Green Forest. This surprised Sammy, because Sammy had hunted and hunted through the Green Forest for Reddy's new home and hadn't found a sign of it.

When Reddy reached the edge of the Green Forest, he followed it to where it joined the Old Pasture. Then he looked this way and that way to make sure that no one was watching him He was very crafty, was Reddy, as he always is. Sure that no one was watching, for he couldn't see Sammy Jay in the thick top of a tall hemlock tree, he turned into an old cow path among the bushes of the Old Pasture and trotted on as swiftly as before. But even then, the clever rascal didn't go straight to his new home. He was far too smart for that. He followed the old cow path a short distance and then leaped lightly to one side among the bushes and jumped up on a big rock, where he sat for a few minutes looking back the way he had come to make sure that no one was following him.

It was well for Sammy Jay that he knew the ways of Reddy Fox. He had expected Reddy to do some such smart trick as this and so he was not caught. Instead of following Reddy he had at once made up his mind that Reddy's home was somewhere in the Old Pasture, and so he had flown swiftly by a roundabout way to a certain tree in the Old Pasture beyond where Reddy was watching and from which he could see much of the Old Pasture. There he sat perfectly still.

Presently Reddy came trotting along right under the tree in which Sammy sat. Reddy didn't once think of looking up. He was quite sure that no one was watching him and he trotted on with an eager look in his eyes, which puzzled Sammy. From bush to bush Sammy followed, and so in a little while came to a place where he could see a heap of yellow sand in front of a great rock and back of the yellow sand an opening in the ground.

"Ha!" said Sammy, but not aloud. His eyes snapped joyfully. He knew that he had found Reddy's new home. Then he hid in a bush close by where he could watch, for he

was not yet satisfied.

"There is something here worth seeing," said he to himself. And Sammy was right.

STORY 1629. May 1, 1917

What Sammy Jay Saw

Sammy Jay, hiding in a bush where he could see the doorway of the new home in the Old Pasture, saw Reddy Fox place on his doorstep the result of his hunt and then heard him bark softly. Almost at once Mrs. Reddy appeared and took what Reddy had brought. She disappeared inside the new house and Reddy turned and trotted off in the direction of the Green Meadows. It was clear to Sammy that Reddy was going hunting again. Hardly was Reddy out of sight than Mrs. Reddy appeared once more, stood for a moment on her doorstep as if trying to decide something, and then trotted off swiftly toward the Green Forest.

All this time Sammy Jay sat perfectly still. His eyes snapped and twinkled and his busy brain turned over and over the surprising things he had found out and tried to decide how he could make use of his knowledge. You know, there is an old saying that two and two will always make four. This is just a queer way of saying that if you are smart enough to put two facts together you may be reasonably sure that they will make a third fact. That is what Sammy Jay was doing as he sat there in that bush near the new home of Reddy Fox.

"Sammy Jay," said he, talking to himself while he waited for Reddy or Mrs. Reddy to return, "you're a smart fellow. You're a very clever chap. You've found out something that I'm sure not one of your neighbors knows. You've found the new house of Reddy Fox. You've found out that Reddy doesn't eat all he catches but brings some home and gives it to Mrs. Reddy. You've found out that Mrs. Reddy takes the food down inside the house and almost right away goes hunting herself.

Now two and two is always four,
  Never less and never more,
Never more and never less—
  That's a fact and not a guess.

"Now I can't see down inside that house, but I don't have to to know what the secret is that is causing all this hunting on the part of Reddy and Mrs. Reddy. Babies! Just as sure as I'm a smart and clever Jaybird there are baby Foxes down there. My gracious, the very idea of Reddy Fox having babies! I can't imagine it. He must feel very grown up. I wonder how many he has. I wish they would come out. My, but this will be news to tell on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest! Sammy, Sammy, you certainly are a smart bird. There isn't any doubt about it, you certainly are smart."

Sammy continued to say nice things about himself and to chuckle as he planned how he would spread the news and thought of how this would upset Reddy. You know, Sammy is always delighted when he can upset Reddy Fox. Of course, it wasn't a bit nice of him to have such thoughts, and it was very conceited of him to think himself so

smart. The latter is one of Sammy's failings. But he is smart. There can be no question about that. And I suppose he can't very well help knowing it.

So Sammy sat and waited and watched and planned mischief and wished those babies would come out so that he could know how many Reddy had. Mrs. Reddy was the first to return. She came so silently that sharp as Sammy's eyes are he didn't see her until there she was right on her doorstep with something in her mouth. Then she disappeared inside her house. Sammy waited and waited until at last his patience gave out. He fairly itched all over to tell the news. So at last he spread his blue wings and started back for the Green Forest.

STORY 1630. May 2, 1917

Sammy Jay Argues with Himself

You know what it means to argue. Of course. Everybody knows that. It is to try to make others think as you do while they try to make you think as they do. It is to try to prove that you are right and someone else is wrong. When you argue with any one you are said to be having an argument. Now, arguments sometimes are very good things and sometimes very bad things. People who can argue without losing their tempers often do a great deal of good, because in this way they bring out all the truth about a matter. But very, very often people who argue lose their tempers and the argument becomes a quarrel, and the quarrel becomes a fight, and it is all very dreadful and a great pity.

Sammy Jay likes to argue, but Sammy is one of those who is apt to lose his temper unless he finds that he is getting the best of the argument. The only safe thing for people like Sammy is for them to argue with themselves and no one else. Sammy does that once in a while. It is a pretty good plan. If more people argued with themselves, they would avoid a great deal of trouble in this world. They wouldn't do a great many of the mean things they do.

When Sammy Jay left the Old Pasture where he had found the new house of Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy and had guessed the secret which it contained, he flew back to the Green Forest in a hurry so as to spread the news that Reddy Fox not only had a new house over in the Old Pasture but also some babies.

He hadn't seen those babies, but he was just as sure that they were there in that new house as if he had seen them. He knew that Reddy and Mrs. Reddy were doing their very best to keep it a secret, and he chuckled long and he chuckled mischievously as he thought how he would tell everybody he met, and so upset Reddy and Mrs. Reddy and perhaps worry them and make trouble for them.

Now, it was quite a distance to the Green Forest, and because he met no one on the way Sammy had time for considerable thinking. He got to thinking of how he would feel if someone should find his nest and tell everybody just where it was and so perhaps bring danger to the helpless babies there. The more he thought of this the more uncomfortable he felt.

He stopped chuckling and flew to his favorite thinking tree. It is a tree in the Green

Forest where Sammy is very fond of sitting alone by himself. A great deal of mischief has Sammy planned in that tree. And there, too, he has planned some of the good deeds which he has done, the deeds which prove that Sammy isn't really bad at heart at all.

"Of course, I'll tell everybody Reddy's secret," said Sammy to himself when he was comfortably seated in his tree. "I ought to. Peter Rabbit ought to know it. Danny Meadow Mouse ought to know it. Bob White and Mrs. Grouse ought to know it. They ought to know it because Reddy Fox, not to mention Mrs. Reddy, will hunt a great deal harder than ever before to get enough to feed those youngsters of theirs. Peter and Bob and Mrs. Grouse and a lot of others ought to be put on their guard."

"But you don't have to tell where Reddy's home is," said Sammy's other self. "You know perfectly well that if you tell this to others, they will tell still others, and sooner or later it will reach the ears of Reddy's enemies. Then something may happen to those babies."

"That isn't any business of mine," declared Sammy.

"Yes, it is," replied his other self. "If anything happened to one of Reddy's babies because you had told the secret of where they are it would be wholly your fault. You would be the one to blame."

"I wouldn't care," snapped Sammy. There are too many Foxes, anyway.

"Yes, you would care," insisted the other self. "You have found out Reddy's secret by spying, and you know what people think of spies."

So for a long time, Sammy Jay argued with himself and got quite provoked with himself and tried to decide what he ought to do and what he ought not to do. It was very perplexing. Don't you think so?

STORY 1631. May 3, 1917

Sammy Jay Makes Up His Mind

When you have quite made up your mind
  To do a thing, go do it!
As surely as you put it off
  You're bound someday to rue it.

That is one of the truest things in the world. It is a great mistake to put off doing a thing you have made up your mind should be done. Just as sure as you do the day will come when you will be sorry. It is doing promptly the things that must be done that helps the great world along. And it saves a deal of trouble—trouble for yourself and trouble for others. On the other hand, don't do things hastily. Don't do a thing and think about it later. Think first, make sure in your own mind what is right, and then do it. You know what a lot of trouble Peter Rabbit get into by doing his thinking too late. Sammy Jay doesn't often make a mistake.

So that is why Sammy sat in his thinking tree and argued with himself about telling

the secret of Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy. He wanted to tell it. He could find a lot of reasons why he should tell it. He tried to make himself believe that it was his duty to tell it. But his better self found a lot of reasons why he shouldn't tell it. At least, his better self said, that he shouldn't tell the whole secret. It would be all right to tell Peter Rabbit and Danny Meadow Mouse and a few others that Reddy and Mrs. Reddy had babies and for this reason would be sure to hunt harder than ever, but it wouldn't be right to tell where those babies were hidden. Sammy wanted to tell the whole secret, not half of it. So he argued and argued with himself until at last he made up his mind what he would do.

"Well, I've settled it, anyway. I've made up my mind just what I'll do," said he right out, forgetting that he might be overheard.

"What will you do?" demanded Chatterer the Red Squirrel from the very next tree, where he had been watching Sammy, though Sammy didn't know it.

"If I told you then you'd know,
But instead, I think I'll go,"

retorted Sammy, snapping his sharp eyes at Chatterer. You know, these two scamps are forever quarreling.

"All right, Mr. Smarty," barked Chatterer, "but if you really do know what you'll do I guess it will be the first time such a thing ever happened."

Right away Sammy's temper flared up and he half spread his wings to fly at Chatterer. Just in time he remembered that Chatterer really was bubbling over with curiosity to know what was in his mind, so instead of flying at Chatterer he chuckled and replied: "I really do know, and if you knew what I know you would know what no one else but Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy knows. Can you guess what it is?"

"No," replied Chatterer. "What is it?" His sharp face was very eager, for Chatterer likes to know all that is going on.

That would be telling," retorted Sammy saucily. "Ask Reddy Fox."

With that Sammy flew away chuckling to himself, while Chatterer flew into a rage and barked all the bad things he could think of after him. Sammy flew straight over to the dear Old Brier Patch to look for Peter Rabbit. He had made up his mind to tell Peter and Danny Meadow Mouse and a few others about Reddy's babies, that they might keep a sharper watch on their own babies, but that he wouldn't tell where Reddy's babies were. In this way he would be doing Peter and the others a service and at the same time would be doing Reddy no harm.

STORY 1632. May 4, 1917

Peter and Mrs. Peter Grateful to Sammy

Sammy Jay found Peter Rabbit dozing under his favorite bramble bush in the dear Old Brier Patch. Sammy's sharp eyes twinkled and twinkled as he looked down at Peter

nodding in perfect contentment. Sammy watched him a few minutes and then he began to speak just as if he were talking to someone else.

"Yes," said he, "they certainly are fine babies. I expect their parents are very fond of them and very proud of them. But they are certainly going to make a lot of trouble for some other people I know of."

Peter suddenly stopped nodding and pricked up his ears. Sammy pretended not to see him and went right on as if talking to someone whom Peter couldn't see.

"Yes, sir," said he, "some people I know will have to watch out mighty sharp for their own babies when these babies begin to grow. In fact, they ought to be watching out mighty sharp right now. If they don't, they will find some of their babies missing one of these days."

By this time Peter was sitting up straight with his long ears stretched as far as they could be stretched and a worried look creeping into his eyes.

"I—I beg your pardon, Sammy Jay," said he politely, "but I couldn't help hearing what you said. You see I was right down here all the time. Would you mind telling me who it is with babies that are likely to make trouble for other people, and who these other people are? I don't want to seem inquisitive, but you know I have some babies of my own who are a great deal of care and if they are in any more danger than usual I want to know it. You don't mind my asking do you Sammy?"

Sammy looked down and chuckled. You know he dearly loves to tease Peter, and it was so funny to see Peter so polite to him.

"It's all right, Peter," said he. "I meant for you to hear. In fact, I was talking for you. This morning, I made a discovery that it seems to me that you and a few others ought to know about. Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy have some babies, and you know what that means. It means they are going to hunt as they never have hunted before, and that other folks with babies, like you and Danny Meadow Mouse, have got to watch out as they never have watched before, both to save their own skins and their babies."

Mrs. Peter had come along in time to hear this, and a very much worried looking little person she was. "What did I tell you, Peter?" said she. "Didn't I say that it was a sad day for the rest of us when Reddy Fox was married? There were dangers enough before, goodness knows, but now I'll never have another minute of peace until our children are grown up. It was very good of you to come over and warn us, Sammy Jay."

"It certainly was," declared Peter. "We'll never forget it."

"O, that's all right," replied Sammy. "I thought you ought to know it as soon as possible. It's nothing. I'm glad to be of service to you, Peter."

"Sammy spoke in a careless way, but right down in his heart he was pleased to have Peter and Mrs. Peter so grateful to him.

"Where did you say Reddy's home and those babies are?" asked Peter, his curiosity getting the best of him.

"I didn't say," replied Sammy, grinning, "and, what is more, I'm not going to say. They are not near enough to worry you so long as you keep your eyes open for Reddy and Mrs. Reddy. I guess it will be some time before those young Foxes will come prowling around the Old Brier Patch. Now I must warn Danny Meadow Mouse. He has more to worry about than you have, if you keep those youngsters of yours in the Brier Patch. Goodbye and good luck."

"Goodbye and thank you ever so much. We'll never forget it!" cried Peter and Little Mrs. Peter together.

STORY 1633. May 5, 1917

Sammy Finds Farmer Brown's Boy at Work

Sammy Jay had left the dear Old Brier Patch after telling Peter Rabbit and little Mrs. Peter that Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy had some babies and on this account were more dangerous than ever and had flown straight over to warn Danny and Nanny Meadow Mouse. Danny and Nanny had been just as grateful as Peter and Mrs. Peter. It made Sammy feel good. You know, it always makes one feel good to do a kind deed to others and have them grateful for it.

When Sammy left Danny and Nanny down on the Great Meadows, he had it in mind to fly over to the Green Forest and warn Whitefoot the Wood Mouse to keep his eyes extra wide open for Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy. As he flew along, he saw something that for the time being quite put Whitefoot out of his head. It was Farmer Brown's boy at work along the old stone wall on the edge of the Old Orchard. He was digging.

"That's funny," thought Sammy. "I wonder what he is digging for there. I wonder if he is trying to dig open somebody's house. I thought he had got over doing things like that, but you never can tell about these men folks. No, sir, you never can tell. They are queer creatures. They certainly are. I guess I'll go over to the Old Orchard and see what is going on."

So Sammy flew over to the Old Orchard without making a sound and found a place in an old apple tree where he could watch Farmer Brown's boy. He found a number of other little people doing the same thing. In fact, all the little people of the Old Orchard were watching Farmer Brown's boy. It didn't take Sammy long to discover that. Welcome Robin, Scrapper the Kingbird, Chippy the Sparrow, Jenny Wren, Tommy Tit the Chickadee, Drummer the Woodpecker, Goldie the Oriole—they were all sitting silent and watching where they could see Farmer Brown's boy at work. It was as silent in the Old Orchard save for Farmer Brown's boy himself as if there were no living creatures there. Peeping out from between the stones of the old wall, Striped Chipmunk was watching just as his feathered friends were. There was a puzzled, and it seemed to Sammy a wee bit anxious, look in Striped Chipmunk's eyes.

Sammy flew over beside Welcome Robin. "What is Farmer Brown's boy doing?" he whispered.

Welcome Robin shook his head. “I don’t know,” said he. “Nobody knows. I mean we don’t know what he is doing it for. You can see for yourself what he is doing. He is digging little holes all along the old wall, but what under the sun they can be for none of us can guess. It’s a funny thing to do, to dig little holes like those. He seems to be happy about it.”

Sammy had already noticed that. Farmer Brown’s boy was whistling the way he always whistles when he is happy or doing something he likes to do. Once in a while he would stop to rest for a few minutes, and then he would look up in the trees as if looking for the birds hidden there and his freckled face would be smiling and good to see.

The fact is, Farmer Brown’s boy knew he was being watched. He knew that ever so many sharp eyes were watching him, though he couldn’t see a single pair. And he knew that his little friends were wondering and wondering what he could be about. When he had rested, he would chuckle and then begin to dig and whistle again. Shrewd Sammy Jay quickly made up his mind to one thing, and that was that whatever Farmer Brown’s boy was digging all those little holes for he intended no harm to anybody. He said as much to Welcome Robin.

“I hope not,” replied Welcome Robin, “but what is it all for? It’s funny, very funny. Of what use can a lot of little holes be to anybody?

STORY 1634. May 7, 1917

Farmer Brown’s Boy Explains

Thrice blessed he who does a deed
He knows will serve another’s need.

While Sammy Jay and all the other little people of the Old Orchard watched and wondered, Farmer Brown’s boy went right on working and whistling. At last, he reached the end of the old stone wall and then he stopped digging. Along the whole length of the old wall just inside the Old Orchard he had dug little holes. He stretched his arms and back, for digging so many holes had been hard work. Then he started for the barn. The birds watched him disappear, and the minute he was out of sight their tongues began to fly. While he was at work you wouldn’t have supposed there was a single bird anywhere around. But the very instant he was out of sight such a racket as there was! Everybody tried to talk at once. You see, every blessed one of them was bubbling over with curiosity.

It wasn’t long before Sammy Jay spied Farmer Brown’s boy coming back, and right away the Old Orchard became as silent as before. Farmer Brown’s boy was trundling a wheelbarrow which seemed to be filled with sticks. When he reached the Old Orchard, he took these out of the wheelbarrow and then Sammy Jay and his neighbors saw what they really were. They were young bushes. Sammy knew that by the roots.

Into each hole Farmer Brown’s boy set one of these little bushes and carefully put

Illustrations. April 30 to May 5, 1917.

1628. Sammy Jay Spies on Reddy Fox
Presently Reddy came trotting right under the tree in which Sammy sat.

1629. What Sammy Jay Saw
Almost at once Mrs. Reddy appeared and took what Reddy had brought.

1630. Sammy Jay Argues with Himself
"Of course I'll tell everybody Reddy's secret," said Sammy to himself.

1631. Sammy Jay Makes Up His Mind
"What will you do?" demanded Chatterer the Red Squirrel from the very next tree.

1632. Peter and Mrs. Peter Grateful to Sammy
"Would you mind telling me who it is with babies that are likely to make trouble for other people?"

1633. Sammy Finds Farmer Brown's Boy at Work
"What is Farmer Brown's Boy doing?" he whispered.

back the earth around the roots and pressed it down firmly. He was planting those little bushes. When he had planted the last one, he once more disappeared, and once more the tongues of the Old Orchard people flew. Then Farmer Brown's boy came back and this time he brought a pail of water in each hand. Very carefully he watered every one of the little bushes he had planted along the old wall. When he had watered the last one, he looked up in the trees where his feathered watchers were hiding and grinned. That grin was good to see.

"I know you are there," said he. "You haven't fooled me a bit by keeping so still. You have been watching me and everything I have done. Don't you wish you knew what I have planted these little bushes for? Well, I wish you did, too. I'm going to tell you; though, of course, you won't understand a word I say. But some day you'll understand. Someday you'll know just why I have planted these bushes all along the old stone wall and then you'll be thankful to me. You see, I've put them there just for YOU. Yes, sir, I've done all this work just for YOU. You see, I love every one of you. I love to have you about. I love to see you and to hear you. More than that, I know that you are all the time doing a great deal for me. It may be that you don't know it, but you are. I know that the more of you there are about the more fruit and vegetables I will get in my garden and the fewer the bugs and the worms will get. And I know that the less hard work with my hoe I will have to do, because you pick up the weed seeds, and so the weeds don't have a chance to grow.

"Now, what I have done is to try to pay you in part for what you have done and will do for me. When these bushes are grown, they will be covered with berries and every one of those berries will be for you. These are barberry bushes and the berries will hang on all Winter. At least those you don't eat will. And I'm going to plant some vines to run all over the old wall—Virginia creeper and fox grape. These will be for you, too. And if you will watch, you will see me setting out some trees tomorrow—Russian mulberry trees. You will like those. You will like those so well that you will not be tempted to eat any of the berries in my garden."

STORY 1635. May 8, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Plans

Farmer Brown's boy kept right on talking to his unseen listeners in the Old Orchard quite as if they could understand all he said. Of course they couldn't. They couldn't understand a word. They could, however, understand that the tone of his voice was friendly and that he was saying something nice.

"Yes, sir," said Farmer Brown's boy, "I've planted these bushes and vines along the old stone wall just for you folks. They will not only give you a lot of food of the kind you like, but they will give you the very best kind of hiding places, especially those of you who like to be near the ground and to build your nests in bushes instead of trees. Just you wait until they have grown and then you will understand. And I'm going to do more than this. Yes, sir, I'm going to do more than this. I'm going to plant some trees in here in the Old Orchard especially for you. What do you think of that?

I'm going to plant some sweet cherry trees and some Russian mulberry trees. Of course I shall want some of those cherries, but half of them will be for you. That is why I am going to plant them.

"You see, it is this way," he continued. I know a lot of you like fruit, but there are only apples and pears in the Old Orchard now and you don't eat those But you do save them from the bugs and the worms for me, and so it seems to me that it is only fair that there should be some fruit that you do like You are going to like those Russian mulberries. Yes, siree, you are going to like them. You are going to like them so well that you won't want any other kind of fruit when you can get these. The best of it is, the fruit lasts two whole months. Now what do you think of that? Gee, I wish you could understand what I am telling you. You would be just as tickled as I am, and more so, I guess. You see, I've found out one thing that a lot of people haven't found out yet, and that is that the more of you feathered folks there are on a farm or around a garden or in an orchard the bigger and better the crops are. If everybody could be made to understand that it would be a mighty fine thing for them and a mighty fine thing for you. Now, I've had my little say and I guess I'll get busy and set out those trees."

As soon as Farmer Brown's boy had disappeared all the tongues in the Old Orchard began to wag as fast as ever they could.

"He had a lot to say, and I wonder what it was all about," said Welcome Robin.

"I don't know, but I'm sure it was something nice," declared Sammy Jay, cocking his head on one side shrewdly.

Jenny Wren had been busy inspecting those newly set bushes. She now came bustling up in her usual fussy way. "I don't know what he said and I don't care," said she. "But I do know that those are sure enough bushes he has set out there and that's enough for me. We need some bushes around the Old Orchard. Trees are all right as far as they go, but bushes are needed, too. I don't know what Farmer Brown's boy set them out for, but in doing it he's done us a good turn. The Old Orchard is going to be a better place to live in than ever before. I've got several friends who think there is no place like a bush in which to build a nest, and I wouldn't wonder a bit but that they will come here to live another year.

"I hope they are the right sort and will be the kind of neighbors we can associate with," said Scrapper the Kingbird, with a sly wink at Sammy Jay. Jenny Wren flew into a passion right away. You know, she is very fussy and rather quick-tempered.

"If they are friends of mine, they certainly are good enough for you!" she sputtered. The idea! They very idea of even hinting that my friends might not be fit for you to associate with! And then Jenny Wren's tongue fairly flew as she told Scrapper what she thought of him, while all the other birds chuckled as they listened.

STORY 1636. May 9, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Puts Up Signs

These were busy, busy days for Farmer Brown's boy. You see, there was so much work to do in the garden, work that Farmer Brown's boy called duty. He always did his duty work first and smilingly. But when it was done, he was quite as busy as before. First there was the planting of all those bushes along the old stone wall on the edge of the Old Orchard. After that there was the planting of all those sweet cherry and Russian mulberry trees. And after these were planted Farmer Brown's boy still found work to do, and all the time he whistled, and it was very plain that his work made him happy.

First, he cut several smooth boards about two feet long and a foot wide. Then he got a brush and some black paint and with his tongue in his freckled cheek, for it was work that required a great deal of care, he printed letters on those smooth boards. Every few minutes he would stand off and look at what he had done and scowl a little when it didn't quite please him and smile a little when it did. Farmer Brown's boy was painting signs.

When he had four of them finished he took them with a hammer and nails and started out with Bowser the Hound gamboling along in front of him. First, he went through the Old Orchard to the side nearest the road, and there he nailed one of the signs to a fence post, so that whoever came along that road would be sure to see it. Then he went over to the Green Forest and at the very beginning of the Lone Little Path he nailed another sign to a tree where whoever came that way would see it. After that he went over to the Green Meadows and nailed a third sign to a fence post there. Finally, he went to the Old Pasture and there he put up his last sign.

Now, all this time a great many sharp eyes had been watching him and a great many little heads had been wondering what it was all about. Just as soon as he had left the Old Orchard all the birds there headed by Sammy Jay had flown straight to the sign to see what it was. It puzzled them. It puzzled them a great deal. They looked at it from in front, from behind, from each side.

"It must be some kind of a trap," declared timid little Tiny the Warbler. "No, it isn't," declared Sammy Jay, positively.

"How do you know, Mr. Smarty?" asked Goldie the Oriole.

"Because I've seen such things before and have sat on them," snapped Sammy Jay.

"You don't dare sit on this one. You don't dare! You don't dare! You don't dare!" cried Jenny Wren.

Sammy said never a word. He simply spread his blue wings and flew straight over to the sign and perched on one end of it. Still he sat there without saying a word. Presently Chippy the Sparrow flew over and sat on the other end.

"You see," said Sammy, "it isn't a trap. It is nothing but a piece of wood, I don't know what it means. I haven't the least idea what it means, but I've noticed that wherever I've seen pieces of board covered with black marks like this, hunters with terrible guns always stop and look and then pass along. So though I don't know what it means there is one thing that I am sure of."

"What is that?" cried all the other birds.

"That it doesn't mean any harm for us, replied Sammy. "In fact, I have an idea that it means good for us. Now I'm going to see if Farmer Brown's boy is putting up more of them." Without another word Sammy Jay flew after Farmer Brown's boy.

STORY 1637. May 10, 1917

A Bird Sanctuary[25]

God bless the tender hearts who seek
To make a refuge for the weak.

Sammy Jay followed Farmer Brown's boy from the Old Orchard to the Green Forest, from the Green Forest to the Green Meadows, and from the Green Meadows to the Old Pasture. In each place Farmer Brown's boy put up one of those boards with the queer black marks on it, which you know and I know were signs. Sammy inspected each one carefully and all the time his shrewd little brain was trying to puzzle out what they meant. If Sammy could only have read them, he might have had the finest bit of news to tell that ever he had stumbled across. But, of course, he couldn't read, so finally he gave up very much puzzled, but right down in his heart sure that they meant something good.

And those signs did mean something good. They meant something splendid. This is what Farmer Brown's boy had printed on each sign.

THIS FARM IS A BIRD SANCTUARY
Hunting on This Land is Forbidden.
No Gunners nor Hunters for Nest
and Eggs Allowed on This Property.
FARMER BROWN'S BOY.

Sanctuary is a big word, but its meaning is even bigger. It means a place of safety. It means a place to which those in danger can go and know that there they will be safe and need no longer worry. So a bird sanctuary is simply a place of safety for the birds. That is what Farmer Brown's boy had made of the farm where he lives by putting up those signs.

"You see, it is like this," he explained to Farmer Brown. "Birds know a whole lot. Of course, they can't read those signs, but it won't take them long to find out that when they are on our land they won't have anything to fear from men and boys. They'll just move right over here to build their nests. That is, those who are not living here now will. And those passing this way on their way South in the Fall and on their way back North in the Spring will stop over here. They'll know after a while that they are safe here. And more than that, they will know that they can get plenty to eat here, because I am going to see that there is always food for them. I've put up houses for the birds that like houses, and I am going to make and put up a lot more. I'm going to keep fresh water always where the birds can get it in the Old Orchard. I'm going to make this old farm the Jim-dandiest place for birds that ever was."

25 STORIES 1633 to 1637 were published in association with the start of Burgess's *People's Home Journal* sanctuary campaign.

Farmer Brown's boy's eyes were shining. Farmer Brown laughed, and it was good to hear, was that laugh. "It seems to me that this is going to cost you a lot of work," said he. "What do you expect to get in return?"

It was Farmer Brown's boy's turn to laugh. "I expect to get paid for it all," said he. "I expect to get paid in pleasure—the pleasure of hearing the birds sing and call and twitter; the pleasure of seeing them about and watching them; the pleasure of knowing I have done a good deed, and I expect to get paid in dollars and cents. Yes, sir, that's what I expect. We are going to have the finest farm anywhere around here just because of the birds. I've watched 'em and I know. The more birds we have the less work I'll have to do fighting those pesky bugs and worms and hoeing out weeds. I watched Little Friend the Song Sparrow one day and he ate over 100 weed seeds in less than five minutes, and I saw Welcome Robin down in the garden pulling out cutworms at a great rate. They'll pay for all I do for them and pay a good many times over."

Farmer Brown smiled. "I guess you are right, son," said he. "And I'm glad you've found out for yourself. Perhaps you can induce some of our neighbors to make sanctuaries of their farms."

"I'm going to try," declared Farmer Brown's boy.

STORY 1638. May 11, 1917

Sammy Jay See the Babies of Reddy Fox

Sammy Jay had been so interested in watching Farmer Brown's boy and trying to make out what he was doing that he almost forgot his secret, or rather the secret of Reddy Fox. But he didn't quite forget, and the first change he got he slipped up to the Old Pasture and hid in a tree from which he could see the doorway of Reddy's home. There wasn't a sign of anybody about, and Sammy sat there a long time waiting and watching. His patience had almost given out when he heard the patter of feet and Mrs. Reddy appeared with food which she laid down on the doorstep. Then she barked softly. Sammy's eyes shone with eagerness as he watched the doorway.

Once more Mrs. Reddy barked softly. Almost right away the funniest little face peeped out of that doorway. Then another just like it appeared. Mrs. Reddy spoke very softly and out on to the doorstep scrambled the owners of those two funny little faces, and in their places in the doorway were two more just like them. Once more Mrs. Reddy spoke very gently and out tumbled the other two babies.

Sammy watched sharply for more, but the doorway was dark and empty. Moreover, Mrs. Reddy paid no more attention to her house, so Sammy knew that there were no more babies there.

"One, two, three, four," counted Sammy to himself. "Reddy has four children. My goodness, but there certainly will be lively times for some people I know when those little rascals get big enough to go hunting on their own account! What funny little woolly scamps they are. I thought they would be red but they're not. They are just sort of yellowish, all but one, and he's darker than the others. That's funny. I wonder why

he isn't like the rest. He looks to me a little bigger, too. I wonder if he will be different when he grows up. What funny little tails. You greedy little rascals!"

That last was because the four babies were pushing and shoving each other as each tried to get more than a fair share of what their mother had brought. They growled the funniest little growls, and all the time they tugged and pulled at the food and tried to take it away from each other and altogether behaved like other people who have not yet been taught good manners.

Mrs. Reddy lay stretched out on the ground at one side watching them, and Sammy couldn't help but notice the look in her eyes. All the hardness and fierceness which he had so often seen in them was gone. Instead, they were filled with a soft, tender light, with loving pride and happiness and gentleness.

"I wouldn't have believed it possible," muttered Sammy to himself. "If anybody had told me that any living fox could look as gentle and harmless as that I wouldn't have believed it. Why, she looks just as gentle and loving as timid little Mrs. Peter Rabbit does when she is watching her babies. I guess we are all pretty much alike after all. Hello, here comes Reddy himself. I wonder how he will look."

Sammy didn't have to wait long to find out. Reddy brought something more for the little Foxes to eat and then he sat down beside Mrs. Reddy and his eyes were as soft and tender as hers. And in them was such pride as only a proud father can feel. They were not at all the same eyes Sammy was used to seeing.

STORY 1639. May 12, 1917

Sammy Jay Gives Himself Away

Sammy Jay was so interested in what he saw that he quite forgot that he was trying to keep a secret. He was, you know. He was trying to keep it a secret that he was there in that little tree. He didn't want Reddy Fox to know it. He didn't want Mrs. Reddy to know it. He didn't want anybody to know it. You see, he was spying. He was spying on Reddy's home and babies. Most folks feel a wee bit ashamed to be caught spying. Perhaps this was one reason that Sammy had tried so hard to keep his being there a secret. But I suspect that the real reason was that he thought he would see more if Reddy and Mrs. Reddy didn't suspect that he knew their secret.

But Sammy forgot. You see, it was such an interesting sight to see those four woolly babies tugging and pulling at each other as they tried to see which was the greediest and could get the most of the dinner which Reddy and their mother had brought them that Sammy forgot everything else. Then when they had eaten the very last scrap they began to play, and they looked so comical as they rolled over and over together, and jumped on each other, and pulled each other's tails and pretended to bite each other, and growled such funny little growls that Sammy actually chuckled aloud. He simply couldn't help it.

Now the ears of Reddy Fox and the ears of Mrs. Reddy are very wonderful ears. They are such wonderful ears that they can hear sounds so faint that you or I wouldn't

hear at all. It is by means of those wonderful ears that they find Meadow Mice who have been foolish enough to squeak ever so softly. So, of course, they heard the chuckle of Sammy Jay's. And, of course, they knew who had chuckled and just where he was. Mrs. Reddy barked sharply and instantly the four funny, woolly little babies raced pell-mell into the house and out of sight. Reddy Fox marched straight over to the tree in which Sammy was sitting and there was no soft and tender look in those eyes that glared up at Sammy.

"Spy! Sneak!" he snarled. "It's well for you that you are where I can't reach you, Sammy Jay. Now I suppose you'll go tell everybody what you've found out by spying. Oh, I wish I could get hold of you, Sammy Jay! You never would go spying again. I can tell you that!" Sammy had an angry retort right on the tip of his sharp tongue, but he thought better of the matter and wisely swallowed three times before he spoke.

"Now, don't lose your temper, Reddy, and don't judge me by yourself," said he smoothly. "I am always tickled for a chance to get you into trouble, as I don't need to tell you. But this is different. I like to get you into trouble because I know you are smart enough to get yourself out of it. But I'm not looking to get helpless babies into trouble. No, sir, that isn't my way. Besides, those woolly little rascals of yours have given me more real fun than I've had for a long time and I wouldn't have anything happen to them for the world. So you needn't worry, Reddy. You needn't worry. I'll keep your secret just as I have been keeping it. I've known about this house of yours for some time, but I haven't told a single soul where it is. I don't intend to now. It is worth more to come up here and watch those youngsters play than it ever could be to give your secret away. You certainly have chosen a nice place for your house. My guess is that Mrs. Reddy picked it out. Please give her Sammy Jay's compliments and tell her not to worry. Nobody will find out about it from me. Goodbye, Reddy. You might invite me to call again, but I shall anyway."

With a flirt of his tail and a twinkle in his sharp eyes Sammy Jay was off before Reddy could find his tongue to reply to this surprising speech.

STORY 1640. May 14, 1917

Lesson and Play

Lessons and play! Lessons and play!
Go where you will, it is always, this way.

You know just how this is yourself. Sometimes it is lessons without any play, and sometimes it seems to be play without any lessons. But often the latter just seems to be. You see, almost always you learn something even in play. And this is the nicest way of learning, because it is fun. Don't you think so?

All the babies of all the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows and the Smiling Pool and the Old Pasture and the Old Orchard learn their first lessons in play. They think they are just playing and having a good time, but all the time they are learning things which they will need to know as they grow up. Now, there is no one

Illustrations. May 7 to May 12, 1917.

1634. Farmer Brown's Boy Explains
Everybody tried to talk at once

1635. Farmer Brown's Boy Plans
"He had a lot to say, and I wonder what it was all about," said Welcome Robin.

1636. Farmer Brown's Boy Puts Up Signs
Farmer Brown's boy was painting signs.

1637. A Bird Sanctuary
"I saw Welcome Robin down in the garden pulling out cut-worms at a great rate."

1638. Sammy Jay See the Babies of Reddy Fox
In their places in the doorway were two more just like them.

1639. Sammy Jay Gives Himself Away
"Spy! Sneak!" he snarled.

who needs to know more than does a young fox. When he is big enough to leave home, he will have to live by his wits, and to live by one's wits it is necessary to be very smart and to learn a great deal.

Now, Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy are very shrewd and smart, and they intended that their children should be taught all that they could be taught. So as soon as the four babies were big enough to come outside the house to play their lessons began. There were four of them, you remember, four of the cutest little woolly scamps with black noses. Sammy Jay had seen many babies, but none that tickled him quite so much as these at play around the doorstep of Reddy's home in the Old Pasture.

There was Chubby, the fattest of the four, and Stubby, who had a way of falling over his own feet; and Cutie, the smallest; and Dusky, the biggest and strongest. When they first poked their little black noses outside everything was new and wonderful, and their little eyes looked as if they would pop out of their little heads, and their little ears were like little question marks. It was a wonderful, a very wonderful world they had come into, and they were eager to know all about it.

But first there were lessons to learn. Mrs. Reddy was a wise mother. Young as these babies of hers were they were not too young to learn the first and most important of all lessons—obedience. And so she began at once to teach them to obey. She told them that they couldn't come out to play or to see any of the wonderful Great World until they had learned to obey her instantly. She told them that wonderful and beautiful as the Great World is, it is full of dangers for little foxes, and that until they have learned all about these dangers, they can be safe only when they obey instantly.

Then she told them to lie down and keep perfect still until she told them they might move. So Chubby and Stubby and Cutie and Dusky lay down on the doorstep and their mother went off out of sight. She didn't go far. O, my, no! She didn't go far. She merely slipped out of sight behind a bush and sat down there to watch. For a few minutes not one of the little foxes moved. They were trying to do just as mother had told them to. Eight little eyes took in all that could be seen without moving, the wonderful blue sky the green leaves of the bushes and trees, and flowers, and insects. Eight little ears listened to all the strange sounds. Eight little noses tested the new smells that the Merry Little Breezes brought from all directions.

Presently a beetle walked across in front of Stubby. Right away he forgot. He forgot that he wasn't to move. You see, he was heedless. That is why he tumbled over his own feet. A little black paw stretched out and touched the beetle. The beetle ran. This was too much for Stubby, and he sprang after it. In a flash his mother was right there, cuffing his ears. Then he was sent into the house in disgrace, whimpering sadly. And there he had to stay while the others romped and played on the doorstep.

STORY 1641. May 15, 1917

A Play School

There's much that you can learn at play

To help you in a later day.

The little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest know this. In fact, most of the lessons which they teach their children are taught in play, and they are some of the most important lessons those lively youngsters ever will learn. The kindergarten you went to, perhaps, when you were very small was just this kind of a play school. It is a lot easier to learn things when you are having a good time and think you are just playing.

No one knows this better than does Mrs. Reddy Fox. So every day her four babies—Chubby, Stubby, Cutie and Dusky—went to school out in front of their home without knowing it. They thought they were just playing and having a good time. So they were, but it was play that was teaching them things very important for every Fox to know. Sammy Jay, going up to the Old Pasture every day to watch them, understood and chuckled to himself as he watched.

They were very lively, those four woolly youngsters, with their sharp faces, bright eyes, and black noses, and full of fun. And they were smart. Of course. It would have been a bit queer if the children of such smart people as Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy had not been smart. They would wrestle with each other and roll over and over together like little woolly balls. They would play tag and chase each other. They would play hide-and-seek among the bushes They would softly steal up to where their mother was pretending to take a sun nap and suddenly pounce on her.

Every little while she would take part in the play. She would hide and they would try to find her. She would lie perfectly still, and sometimes it would be such a long time before one of them accidentally found her that perhaps one or two of them would give up. This was because they used their eyes only. If she had moved ever so little one of those pairs of bright eyes would have been sure to see her. So they learned the value of keeping perfectly still.

Then she would send them to hide, and they would do just as she had done, keeping perfectly still, although it sometimes was very hard work. Instead of running about this way and that way, as they had done, she would trot in a little circle until the wind blew in her face. Then she would sniff the wind until she caught the scent of one of the hidden scamps and then follow her nose straight to where he was hiding. So, no matter how carefully they hid, she found them almost at once.

Dusky was the first to discover how she did it and the next time she hid he found her in the same way. Then the others discovered the trick. So it was that they learned to use their noses and that their noses could tell them what their eyes couldn't. Then their mother gave them another lesson in the use of those black little noses. She sent one of them to hide and then simply followed his track with her nose. This was great fun, and while Mrs. Reddy stretched out for a rest the youngsters hunted each other by means of their noses.

It was all play and no end of fun, and yet they were at school. They were at school and didn't know it. It was a play school. Sammy Jay knew and chuckled more than ever as he saw how quick those funny, woolly little scamps were to learn.

STORY 1642. May 16, 1917

Noses and Wits

It isn't merely what you have
That counts the most, as you will find;
It's knowing how to use it best.
And doing it with heart and mind.

Chubby, Stubby, Cutie and, Dusky, the four children of Reddy Fox, had learned in play that their noses were for something more than merely to smell the good things their mother and father brought them to eat. They had learned that those noses could find their mother in hiding when their eyes, though they were ever so bright, couldn't. They had learned to find each other in the same way. They had learned that when the Merry Little Breezes blew in their faces, they brought the scent of whoever happened to be near in the direction from which the Merry Little Breezes had come, but that they never could smell anybody who was in the opposite direction. They had learned that by keeping their noses to the ground they could follow their mother or one another. When they had learned this, they thought they had learned all there was to know about using their noses.

Then it was that she taught them the use of the broken trail. First, she went out of sight to hide, telling the cubs to follow her with their noses when she should bark for them. As soon as she was out of sight of the cubs Mrs. Reddy trotted straight to a big stone on which she lightly sprang. Then she barked to call the youngsters. After she was sure that they had started to follow her trail with their sharp little noses she made a long jump from the top of the rock off to one side and then smiling, trotted back home.

Chubby, Stubby, Cutie and Dusky followed their mother's trail by keeping their sharp little black noses to the ground. Pretty soon they came to the big stone from which their mother had made her long jump. Just short of the big stone all trace of their mother disappeared. Her trail ended. Beyond that point there wasn't the faintest whiff of scent. They scurried this way and they scurried that way with their noses to the ground sniffing and sniffing. One of them even went way around the big stone. Then they sat down and stared at each other with such funny looks on their faces that Sammy Jay almost laughed aloud. Sammy was where he could watch the whole performance. Their eyes were very round with wonder as they stared at each other. This was very mysterious. Yes, sir, it certainly was. What had become of mother? What COULD have become of mother? First one and then the other stared up at the sky as if they thought that somehow she must have had wings they didn't know about and flown away like the birds. It was very funny to watch.

The mystery of it began to frighten some of them a little. You know almost everyone is apt to be a little fearful of a thing they cannot understand. So it is no wonder that such little folks as those Fox cubs should begin to feel uneasy. Something was wrong. They had learned to have the greatest faith in their noses and now all of a sudden their noses had failed them. At least that is the way it seemed.

"I'm going home," whimpered Stubby and started back.

Chubby followed and after waiting a little Cutie did the same thing. Dusky sat down to think. He felt like going home, too, but something inside of him made him want to find out what had become of his mother. "She's done something to fool us, and she wants us to find out what it is," thought he. "Now what could she do?" He wrinkled his brows and little black nose as he tried to think. Finally, he got up and walked over to the big stone. He sniffed all around it. Then he stood up with his forepaws against it and stretched as far as he could. Quite from force of habit he sniffed. Ha! What was that? He sniffed again eagerly. From the top of that stone there came to him just the faintest smell of Mother Fox. She certainly had been on that stone! There was no doubt about it.

Once more Dusky sat down to think. He had learned to use his nose and now he was learning to use his wits. "I won't go home until I find out where Mother Fox went to," said he to himself.

STORY 1643. May 17, 1917

Dusky's Wits Help Out His Nose

If you persist, and still persist, and keep right on persisting.
You'll find some day, as sure as fate, that things have stopped resisting.

It's true. It's the one great secret of success. You know if water keeps dropping in one place—drop, drop, drop, drop, never stopping—it will in time wear a hole in the hardest rock. In just the same way, whoever starts out to do a thing and persists is almost sure to succeed sooner or later.

Dusky, the biggest of the four children of Reddy Fox, was too young to know this, but there was something in him that would not let him give up easily a thing he had started out to do. So when he started out to find his mother and her trail suddenly ended at a big stone in a very mysterious way, he wasn't ready to give up until he had done everything he could think of to find out what had become of her. So when his sisters and brother turned and trotted back home, Dusky wouldn't go with them. Instead he sat down to think.

Then he examined that big stone and his nose told him that his mother had been up on top of that big stone. This was a very great discovery, and Dusky sat down to think it over. On the ground her trail ended some three feet from that big stone. In that three feet there wasn't the faintest trace of scent, but on the big stone itself there was. Dusky was puzzled over this for some time, and then an idea popped into his head. "I know." he cried. "She jumped. That's what she did. She jumped from the place where her trail ends right on to that big stone. She isn't up there now, so of course she must have jumped off again. All I've got to do now is to find where she landed on the ground again."

He was so tickled with himself because he had thought of this that he stopped to chase his own tail from sheer happiness. Then, with his nose to the ground, he trotted in

a circle around the big stone. When he got back to where he had started, he had found nothing. “Huh!” grunted Dusky and started on a little bigger circle. The result was just the same as before. Dusky took another sniff at the big stone just to get encouragement and started another circle a little bigger than before. Twice more he did this, and the last time he found what he wanted. His little black nose caught the scent of his mother’s feet. It was rather faint, because it was some time since it had been left there, but it was enough for him to follow by being careful.

Dusky was careful. Having once more found his mother’s trail he had no intention of losing it through carelessness. So with his little black nose close to the ground, he followed it. The farther he went the stronger the scent grew, and presently he popped out of the bushes—where do you think? Why, right in front of his own home! And there lay his mother watching him with such a proud and happy look in her eyes. And there sat his two sisters and his brother looking very sheepish and uncomfortable, as if they had been scolded or told something equally unpleasant.

Dusky made a playful little spring at his mother with a little yelp of delight. She kissed him and fondled him and told him that she was proud of him, because he had used his wits as well as his little black nose, and that when he grew up, he would find that no Fox could live long unless he did use his wits. Then she explained that what she had done is a trick all Foxes must use and is called breaking a trail, and is very, very useful.

STORY 1644. May 18, 1917

Dusky Continues to Learn

Learn a little every day,
While you work and while you play.

If you do this, some day you will be thought very learned and wise. Anyway, you will be a great deal better fitted to get on in the world. Knowledge is the most valuable thing in the world, especially when you know how to use it. And knowledge never just comes to anyone. It is the result of learning things day by day and then remembering them. And the very best way of learning things is to find them out for yourself. It is very easy to forget a thing you have been told, but when you find a thing out for yourself you will remember it for a long, long time. That is why Mother Fox was so tickled when Dusky found out for himself how she had broken her trail. She knew that he would remember it always, and so in time of need would know how to do the same thing himself.

A few days later Mrs. Reddy took her four children out for a little trip to see a little of the Old Pasture. She told them to follow her tracks with their noses, and then if she should happen to get out of sight they wouldn’t get lost. So Chubby, Stubby, Cutie and Dusky dutifully started out with their funny little black noses to the ground. Dusky, being a little the biggest, led, and the others followed. Remembering how his mother had fooled them the day she broke the trail at the big stone, Dusky guessed that she might try some new trick to puzzle them this time, and so he kept his nose right in her

tracks. The others were quite willing to let him do the work, and there were so many new and wonderful things to see that they soon forgot to keep their noses to the ground.

Their mother soon slipped out of sight, Dusky had expected she would, and grinned. The ground was damp and the scent left by her feet was strong in Dusky's nose. Presently he came to a tiny little rill of water, and right there the scent stopped. Dusky stopped and cocked his head on one side with an air of great wisdom very funny to see. Sammy Jay, who was watching, wanted to laugh. Dusky grinned.

"It's another of mother's tricks," thought he. "I wonder what it can be. There isn't anything for her to jump up on and she couldn't have jumped very far without jumping off of something."

He jumped across the little rill himself and ran this way and that way with his little black nose to the ground. But he found no scent of Mother Fox. Then he came back to where his sisters and brother were sitting about wondering what to do. Dusky once more sat down and cocked his head on one side and stared at the tiny stream as if he were trying to see something in it. This has something to do with it," thought he.

Then he trotted along up the bank with his little black nose to the ground. For quite a little distance he ran, but found nothing. Then he turned and ran back to where he had started from, and where his sisters and brother were running about quite aimlessly. Dusky didn't stop. He went on down the little rill with his little black nose to the ground as before. This time he didn't go far before he found the scent of his mother quite as strong as when he had lost it. A few bounds farther on he found her sitting on a little hummock, from which she had watched him all the time.

Then she told him that she had simply walked down there in the middle of the little rill because running water takes away all scent. And so Dusky learned another very important thing—that water is a splendid friend when you know how to use it.

STORY 1645. May 19, 1917

Something About Sand

Because Dusky was proving the smartest of the four children of Reddy Fox, his mother was just a wee bit more proud of him than of the others. Perhaps she didn't love him any more than she did the others. I don't suppose she did. I hope not, because that wouldn't have been at all right. But she just couldn't help giving him a little more attention than she did Chubby and Stubby and Cutie. You will find that all through life it is that way. Everybody likes to show one who is quick to learn, who does as he is told, and uses his head, how to do things.

So it is not surprising that it was Dusky that his mother took the most pleasure in training in the things that a young Fox must learn. You see, he had showed her that he was eager to learn, and he had used his wits when his sisters and brother had given up without really trying to learn about the things that had puzzled them so. Probably this is why Mrs. Reddy took Dusky off alone one day when the others were taking a nap in their home. "You have learned how to break a trail by jumping far to one side and you

have learned that running water can hold no scent," said she." Now I am going to teach you something else, but I am going to leave it for you to find out for yourself what that something else is. We will take a little walk, and I want you to follow me with your nose just as you did before. This is all I am going to tell you. The rest is for you to find out for yourself."

That sounded like a puzzle of some kind, and Dusky liked puzzles. So he followed his mother with his nose in her tracks. The ground was damp and the scent was so strong that he could have followed her with his eyes shut. Presently they came to a little open place which was almost pure sand and on which jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun was shining with all his might. Mrs. Reddy trotted straight across this. Dusky followed. He had kept his nose to the ground as he had been told to do. The instant he reached that sand something queer happened. He could no longer smell the scent from his mother's feet. No, sir, he could no longer smell that scent. He kept right on across the sandy place, and the instant he was across the scent tickled his little black nose as strong as ever. By and by they came to another little sandy place and the same thing happened. It was very queer, very queer indeed. It happened two or three times more. Whenever his mother stepped on hot dry sand she left no scent, or, else so little that he could hardly smell it at all.

Mrs. Reddy didn't say a word until they were back home once more. Then she smiled at Dusky and asked him what he had learned. Dusky blinked his shrewd, sharp little eyes and looked very thoughtful."

"I—I don't know as I have learned anything," said he. "But I noticed something," he added hopefully.

"What did you notice?" asked his mother.

"I noticed that when you ran across those sandy places, I couldn't smell your tracks very well. Sometimes I couldn't smell them at all," replied Dusky.

His mother smiled more than ever. "Then you did learn something," said she. "You learned what I wanted you to learn. I went across those sandy places just to see if you would notice anything. You have learned that hot, dry sand doesn't hold scent from the feet of those who cross it, or if it does it holds very little and that soon disappears. Don't forget it. It is another one of the things every Fox should know. Now I'll go get you a fat mouse."

STORY 1646. May 21, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Finds Reddy's Home

While Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy wanted their home to be kept a secret from everybody so far as possible, this was chiefly because they knew, just as you and I know, that the more people know a certain thing the more will find it out, and they thought that in this way the only ones they really feared would find out their precious secret. Who were these? Can't you guess? Why, they were Bowser the Hound and the two-legged creatures called men and boys. This was one reason that Mrs. Reddy

Illustrations. May 14 to May 19, 1917.

1640. Lesson and Play
For a few minutes not one of the little foxes moved.

1641. A Play School
So no matter how carefully they hid, she found them at once.

1642. Noses and Wits
"I'm going home," whimpered Stubby, and started back.

1643. Dusky's Wits Help Out His Nose
Presently he popped out of the bushes—where do you think? Why, right in front of his own home.

1644. Dusky Continues to Learn
Dusky once more sat down and cocked his head on one side and stared at the tiny stream.

1645. Something About Sand
"I—I don't know as I've learned anything," said he.

had chosen to make their home way off there in the Old Pasture. She had noticed that the Old Pasture seldom had visitors. Farmer Brown's boy drove the cows there every morning and every night he let them out and drove them home again to be milked. But always the cows were waiting for him right at the bars, so it was very seldom he ever entered the Old Pasture.

So it was a long time before anybody but Sammy Jay knew where Reddy and Mrs. Reddy were living. Always when they went out to hunt and when they returned Reddy and Mrs. Reddy took the greatest pains to break their trail two or three times so that if Bowser the Hound or anyone else with a nose for following a trail should happen along and start to follow the trail of either of them it would lead nowhere in particular. It was a lot of work to do this every time, but they were too shrewd and cunning not to. It was a part of their wisdom handed down to them from their parents, the kind of wisdom which is called instinct.

One morning Farmer Brown's boy drove the cows to the Old Pasture as usual, put up the bars, and then climbed up and sat on them just to look at and enjoy the beauty of the world about him. It was very lovely. The songs of birds came to him from all directions. The bright faces of many flowers smiled up at him. The hum of bees and other insects made a pleasant sound. High overhead in the blue, blue sky Ol' Mistah Buzzard was sailing round and round in great circles. Farmer Brown's boy sat on the top rail of the pasture bars with his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands and began to dream wonderful daydreams.

He had not been dreaming long when he saw a spot of red over on the Green Meadows and it moved. Farmer Brown's boy stopped dreaming.

"Reddy Fox, as I live!" he exclaimed. "I haven't seen Reddy for a long time. The rascal is coming this way. I'll keep perfectly still and perhaps he won't see me."

So Farmer Brown's boy kept perfectly still and because of this Reddy didn't notice him at all, although he was in plain sight. He didn't smell Farmer Brown's boy because the Merry Little Breezes happened to be blowing the other way. So, all unsuspecting Reddy drew nearer and finally slipped under the fence only a little way from where Farmer Brown's boy was sitting. Then he disappeared among the bushes in the Old Pasture.

Now Reddy had come so near that Farmer Brown's boy had seen that he was carrying food in his mouth and Farmer Brown's boy had guessed right away just what that meant.

"He's got a den up here in the Old Pasture with babies in it," though Farmer Brown's boy. "I think I'll look around a bit."

He jumped down from the bars into the Old Pasture and started off in the direction Reddy had taken. Now, the upper part of the Old Pasture was covered with patches of bushes and young trees and tangles of brambles, and in and out among these wound many paths made by the cows. These paths twisted and turned and crossed among these patches of bushes and brambles and led nowhere in particular. Farmer Brown's boy followed them because they offered the easiest walking. For a long time, he wandered

about aimlessly without discovering a sign of Reddy Fox. He was almost ready to give up and go home when by chance he came out in front of a big rock almost hidden by bushes and young trees, and there right close to the big rock was a heap of shining sand and a hole going down right under the big rock. Farmer Brown's boy chuckled. There wasn't a sign of any living thing near, but he saw a few feathers caught in the bushes nearby and he knew what these meant. He had found Reddy's home and Reddy certainly had some babies there.

STORY 1647. May 22, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy is Clever

The instant Farmer Brown's boy saw that hole beneath the big rock way back in the Old Pasture he knew that he had found the home of Reddy Fox. And when he saw a few feathers clinging to the bushes close by, he knew that Reddy had some children there. Those feathers told him that. He knew that neither Reddy nor Mrs. Reddy would have brought a chicken way up here to the Old Pasture to eat. The very fact that it had been brought way up there told him that there were youngsters too small themselves to go hunting.

Now Farmer Brown's boy hadn't had Reddy Fox for a neighbor without learning just how smart Reddy is. He had seen Reddy enter the Old Pasture with something in his mouth. It was this that had started him to looking for Reddy's home. It had taken him quite a while to find that home, and although he hadn't caught so much as a glimpse of Reddy's bright coat since he himself had entered the Old Pasture he didn't have a shadow of a doubt that Reddy had seen him. It might be that Reddy was inside that house now, but Farmer Brown's boy doubted it. The chances were that Reddy was that very minute watching him from a hiding place among the bushes.

Farmer Brown's boy didn't walk over to that hole under the big rock, as you or I might have done. He was too clever for that. He knew that if he should do that Reddy would know at once that his home had been found. Then he and Mrs. Reddy might dig a new home and remove their children there. They are very smart, are Reddy and Mrs. Reddy, and no one knows it better than Farmer Brown's boy. So though he fairly ached to examine that home and to see if there were prints of little feet in the sand in front of it, he kept right on past as if he hadn't seen it at all.

"Just as surely as I am walking that Fox is watching me," thought he. "I know him. I want to see those youngsters of his, but if he suspects that I know anything about them I'll never get the chance. I've got to fool him. If I keep right on, perhaps he'll think I haven't seen his home, and if he does, he won't change it. Then I'll have to find a good hiding place a little way off from which I can watch what goes on here. Those feathers are certainly chicken feathers, but they are not from my chickens. They are a different color from any I have. All the same I'll keep my chickens shut up a little closer than ever. Young foxes grow fast, and to grow fast they need a lot to eat. Reddy hasn't bothered my chickens for a long time, but with young ones to feed he may be tempted. I suspect that the only reason he hasn't is because he thinks it is safer not to

catch chickens quite so near his own home."

All the time he was thinking these things Farmer Brown's boy had kept right on walking, so that pretty soon he was quite out of sight of Reddy's home. When he felt that he had gone far enough to remove any suspicions Reddy might have he turned toward another part of the Old Pasture, He felt it in his bones that Reddy had followed him, and in this he was right. Reddy had. But when Reddy saw him turn toward another part of the Old Pasture, he stopped following him. He concluded, just as Farmer Brown's boy hoped he would, that his home hadn't been discovered after all.

Farmer Brown's boy kept on for some distance, then turned again and by walking in a big circle got around back of where Reddy's home was. There was a certain high, flat rock there, and to the top of this Farmer Brown's boy crept very carefully, that he might not make a sound. Just as he had hoped he found he could look down and see Reddy's home. Farmer Brown's boy chuckled, for there in front of his home sat Reddy Fox, looking in the direction in which he had seen Farmer Brown's boy disappear.

STORY 1648. May 23, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Sees Interesting Things

Flat on his stomach on top of a high rock far back in the Old Pasture lay Farmer Brown's boy chuckling to himself, but all the time taking the greatest care not to chuckle aloud. He was chuckling to think that he had been clever enough to fool Reddy Fox. Right down below him was Reddy's home, and with his back to him there sat Reddy himself looking in the direction he had last seen Farmer Brown's boy. For a long time, he sat there without moving. Then it was clear that he had made up his mind that Farmer Brown's boy had really gone, for he turned to his doorway and barked softly. Almost at once Mrs. Reddy came out and sat down beside him,

"They are talking it over," chuckled Farmer Brown's boy. They are trying to decide if all is safe."

Presently Reddy trotted out of sight. He was going hunting. Mrs. Reddy looked this way and that way and sniffed the air to make sure that all was safe and then barked softly. Out tumbled the four little foxes and began to play just as little human children do when they have been shut in the house,

Farmer Brown's boy was sure that he never before had seen such cute and funny youngsters anywhere. After they had romped and tumbled over each other for a while their mother called them to her. Farmer Brown's boy wished he could hear what she was saying to them. He was sure she was telling them something because of the funny way they put their heads to one side and tried to look very wise. Then Mrs. Reddy touched their noses with her nose, which I suppose was her way of kissing them, and trotted off.

"She's going hunting, too," thought Farmer Brown's boy. "It must be hard work to get enough food to fill the stomachs of such hungry, lively little rascals. I certainly will have to watch my chickens."

For a few minutes after their mother had disappeared the four little foxes were very quiet. It was clear that they felt just a little bit lonesome. Then they began to play again, but Farmer Brown's boy noticed that every few seconds one or another would stop to look and listen suspiciously. When their mother was with them, they didn't do this.

Farmer Brown's boy reached for an old stick and broke it so that it made a sharp, snapping sound. Instantly the four foxes stopped playing and kept perfectly still in whatever position they happened to be. One was on his back. Another had one paw lifted. The third was just ready to spring on the fourth, who was sitting on the doorstep. At the sound of that sharp snap, they "froze," which means that they became perfectly still, as still as if they had really frozen. One minute, two minutes they remained so, their sharp little ears cocked to catch any more strange sounds. Then the biggest, which was Dusky, you remember, trotted straight into the house, and one after another the others followed him. It was clear from their appearance that they were suspicious. That sound of the snapping stick was new and strange. They had kept perfectly still trying to find out what had made it, but without success. It might mean danger. If it did, the only safe place for them was out of sight inside the house. Their mother had taught them this when they first came out to see what the wonderful outdoors was like, Now, like dutiful children, they were minding.

Farmer Brown's boy watched as long as he could, for he had work to do at home, but not another sign of the four little foxes did he see.

STORY 1649. May 24, 1917

First Lesson in Hunting

Whenever he could do so Farmer Brown's boy slipped away to the Old Pasture to the high, flat-topped rock from which he could see the home of Reddy Fox and what went on there. Always he was careful to take a round-about way so as to reach that rock from the upper side of the Old Pasture. You see, he felt quite sure that Reddy would not be looking for him from that direction. Another thing Farmer Brown's boy was very careful about was the direction of the wind. He never went to the high rock when the Merry Little Breezes were blowing from it toward Reddy's home. He knew that to do that would be to give himself away, for there are few keener noses than those of Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy. They would be sure to smell him and so find out his secret.

There was one who did know what Farmer Brown's boy was doing. Can you guess what that was? Sammy Jay. Of course. There is little going on that Sammy doesn't find out. You know, Sammy spent much time watching those youngsters of Reddy's himself, and he wasn't long in discovering what Farmer Brown's boy was doing. At first Sammy thought he would give Reddy warning, but after watching Farmer Brown's boy a while he made up his mind that the latter intended no harm and so kept his tongue still. If it had been anybody but Farmer Brown's boy, Sammy certainly would have screamed a warning at the top of his voice. But Sammy had learned that Farmer Brown's boy was a friend of all the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, and so he had a friendly feeling for Farmer Brown's boy himself.

"If I see him doing anything that looks as if he meant any harm I'll warn Reddy," muttered Sammy.

So Farmer Brown's boy watched the young Foxes and Reddy Fox didn't know it; and Sammy Jay watched Farmer Brown's boy and the latter didn't know it. And all the time the little Foxes grew and played and learned their lessons, and Reddy and Mrs. Reddy thought that no one but Sammy Jay had found out their secret; and Farmer Brown's boy thought no one had found out his secret, and Sammy Jay chuckled to himself and kept his tongue still.

One day as Farmer Brown's boy lay on the high rock he saw Mrs. Reddy start out with the four children behind her. She led the way to a certain place where there was much long, dead grass and as she approached it, she walked very carefully with her sharp ears cocked forward. Behind her the four little Foxes did just as she did and their funny little ears were cocked forward just as hers were. When she stopped, they stopped. Whatever she did they did.

Presently there was the faintest of squeaks in the grass. Mrs. Reddy stood up on her hindlegs so that she could see better. The four little Foxes tried to do the same thing. There was just the tiniest movement in the grass. Like a flash Mrs. Reddy sprang forward and brought her forepaws down close together just beyond where that grass had moved. Then she picked up a fat mouse, which she had caught without seeing it. Farmer Brown's boy wondered which of those excited youngsters crowding about her she would give it to. What do you think she did? Why, she ate it herself. Perhaps she thought it wouldn't be fair to give it to one while the others had none. Perhaps it was her way of letting them know that if they would eat, they must catch their own breakfast. The disappointed looks on those four little faces were funny to see.

Then Mrs. Reddy sat down grinning and sent the four youngsters to hunt for their breakfast. They scattered about in the grass and did just as she bad done. They walked about softly and tried to stand on their hind legs so as to see better. Once in a while one of them would see the grass move and would spring, only to be just too late. But it was great fun and very exciting, and now and then one of them would catch a bug or a beetle and appear just as proud as if it had been a mouse. And finally the biggest of them, Dusky, did catch a mouse. Never was there a prouder young Fox nor a prouder mother.

STORY 1650. May 25, 1917

Chubby Wanders Away

Alas, alas! Alack-a-day!
That little folks will not obey!

Did you ever stop to think that most of the trouble that little folks get into comes from disobedience? It's a fact. Just stop a minute and think of the troubles you have had and see if in almost every case it wasn't because you had disobeyed or had forgotten, and forgetting very often is only one form of disobedience.

Now, the four little foxes in the Old Pasture had been warned not to go out of sight of their home when their father and mother were away. They had been warned over and over again. This was so that if danger should come, they could scamper into their house and be safe. While they were very small, they minded perfectly. They minded because they were afraid not to. They were afraid of the Great World because it was all so strange. But as they grew and learned the things that little foxes have to learn, and as they became familiar with the sounds and sights about them in the Old Pasture, they lost fear of the Great World and began to want to see more of it. You see, like most young folks they began to think themselves very wise and quite able to take care of themselves.

And so it happened that one day Chubby, the fattest of the four and a little bit inclined to want to have her own way and to do as she pleased, decided that she would see more of the Great World. So as soon as Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy were out of sight, Chubby started out to see the Great World. Dusky saw her going beyond the boundary which her mother had set.

Where are you going, Chubby?" he called.

"It isn't any of your business where I am going," replied Chubby, most impolitely, "but if it will do you any good to know, I am going to see something of the Great World. I'm tired of this little bit we can see here."

"You better not," warned Dusky. "You know what mother will say."

"Mother won't know unless you tell," returned Chubby. "I'm not going far. I'll be back before mother gets back. It's all nonsense making us keep always in sight of home. We are old enough and big enough to take care of ourselves. At least, I am. You may be afraid, but I'm not."

With a toss of her head Chubby went on.

Chubby was just like a lot of little people I know. She thought that to disobey a little didn't amount to much. That is, she thought that if she went only a little way, it wouldn't be so bad as if she went a long way. She quite over-looked the fact it wasn't the distance she went that was wrong, but the fact that she disobeyed. She had no intention of going far. She meant to go only a little beyond where she had been before and then hurry back home.

So Chubby trotted on, feeling very smart, and in a very little while she was farther from home than she ever had been before. Everything was new and strange, and therefore very wonderful. There was so much for her inquisitive little nose to investigate, so much for her bright eyes to see, so much for her sharp little ears to hear that she forgot all about her good intention of going only a little way. She went on and on. Always just ahead was something she simply MUST see. At last, she grew tired, for you know she was only a little fox and never before had she been so far. She sat down to rest, and then all in a flash it came over her that she was lost. She didn't know the way back home.

STORY 1651. May 26, 1917

Lost, Frightened, and Alone

If ever you feel you don't want to obey,
  Remember what happened to Chubby the day
She disobeyed mother and left her nice home
  From foolish desire the Great World to roam.

Chubby, the fattest of the four children of Reddy Fox, was lost. She had disobeyed by going beyond sight of home while her mother and father were away hunting. She hadn't meant to go more than a few steps beyond sight of home, but those few steps had led to a few more steps, and those to still more, because always just ahead were such interesting things to see and smell.

And then at last, when she had grown so tired that she had to sit down to rest, she discovered that she hadn't the least idea where home was. She was lost. There was no doubt about it—she was lost. You see, she hadn't come in a straight line. If she had, all she would need to do now would be to turn around and go straight back. But she had wandered this way, and wandered that way, wherever her eyes or her nose discovered something she wanted to know about, and how she hadn't the least idea where home was.

Of all dreadful feelings, one of the most dreadful is the feeling of being lost and of not knowing which way to go or what to do. It is bad enough when there is someone with you, but when you are all alone it is ever so much worse. And Chubby was alone, very much alone.

Now the thing to do when you discover that you are lost is to sit down and try to be calm. When you know that others will soon be looking for you it often is best to stay right where you are. But people who are lost seldom do these things. They lose their heads. That is, they become so frightened and excited that they start right on again trying to find their way home and usually getting more lost. It was just so with Chubby. The instant she knew that she was lost she forgot she was tired and began to run.

And as she ran Chubby whimpered miserably. The Great World was no longer a beautiful place and a wonderful place and an interesting place. It was a dreadful place. Yes, sir, it was a dreadful place. Chubby imagined all sorts of dreadful dangers. She was sure they were hiding behind every bush and every tree ready to spring out at her. So she ran and ran and ran and ran and hadn't the least idea where she was going, which usually is the way with people who are lost. And all the time she was getting farther and farther from home. And all the time she whimpered as she ran.

"I want my mother. I want my mother," she whimpered over and over. Old Jed Thumper, the big gray Rabbit, who lives in a bullbrier castle in the Old Pasture, saw her pass and chuckled, for he knew what had happened.

"I hope that young Fox gets so lost she never will be found," he muttered. "There are too many foxes around here already. It is getting so that an honest Rabbit needs to have eyes all over him to keep his skin whole."

Chubby didn't see him and she didn't hear him and she didn't smell him. She was

so frightened that she had forgotten that she had eyes with which to see and ears with which to hear and nose with which to smell. All she did was to run blindly, whimpering for mother and home. And so at last she came to where the Old Pasture joins the Green Forest.

STORY 1652. May 28, 1917

Chubby is More Frightened Than Ever

The trees are lovely, friendly things,
And yet they can be fearsome, too.
That's when they stand about in crowds
And shut you in the way they do.

Chubby Fox, lost and getting more lost every minute, had reached the place where the Old Pasture joins the Green Forest. She didn't know it. You see she was so frightened because she was lost that she forgot she had eyes and ears and nose. The only thing she could think of was to keep on running in the hope that thus she would reach home. So at first she didn't notice the difference in things about her. She didn't notice that there were no longer bushes and bramble-tangles and little trees with grassy places all in between, and the wonderful blue, blue sky right overhead all the time. No, sir, at first she didn't notice these things were no longer all about her. Perhaps it was because of the tears in her eyes.

But at last Chubby had to stop. She had run until she couldn't run another step. She was the fattest of Reddy's four children, you know, and that made it harder for her to run than it would have been for either of her brothers or her sister. Her little legs ached. Her breath came in painful little gasps. She simply had to drop right flat on the ground where she was. It was then she discovered that she was in a very strange part of the Great World. All about her were trees. There were trees, trees, trees. They were in front of her, behind her, on each side of her. Whichever way she looked they crowded about her. And such trees! The only trees she ever had seen before were very young trees, for only very young trees are found in the Old Pasture. These trees seemed to touch the sky. Looking up she could see only tiny scraps of the blue, blue sky. She couldn't see jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun at all. It was dark there compared with her home in the Old Pasture and very, very still.

Poor Chubby. Poor little, lonely, frightened Chubby. The great trees, which really were very friendly, didn't seem friendly at all. When the Merry Little Breezes danced through their tops they whispered together and this whispering frightened Chubby more than ever. She thought they were whispering about her. She was sure of it. She just knew they were planning harm for her. She wanted to get out of their sight. So, as soon as she had rested a little, she crept under a little hemlock tree with branches close to the ground. There she felt better because she couldn't be seen by the great trees and because she couldn't see them unless she tried to.

The ground was soft and comfortable, and in spite of her fright and loneliness Chubby went to sleep. You see she was a very little Fox and she was very, very tired

Illustrations. May 21 to May 26, 1917.

1646. Farmer Brown's Boy Finds Reddy's Home
He had found Reddy's home and Reddy certainly had some babies there.

1647. Farmer Brown's Boy is Clever
When Reddy saw him turn toward another part of the Old Pasture he stopped following him.

1648. Farmer Brown's Boy Sees Interesting Things
"They are talking it over," chuckled Farmer Brown's Boy

1649. First Lesson in Hunting
He saw Mrs. Reddy start out with the four children behind her

1650. Chubby Wanders Away
"Where are you going, Chubby?" he called.

1651. Lost, Frightened, and Alone
"I hope that young fox gets so lost she never will be found," he muttered.

and quite worn out with fright. Then, too, it was very, very still there in the Green Forest. So Chubby's little eyes closed and she went to sleep. What a blessed thing sleep is when you are in trouble. It brings rest and forgetfulness for a little while any way. So Chubby forgot her troubles and her loneliness and went to sleep under the little hemlock tree. High overhead the big trees whispered together now and then, but otherwise it was as still as still could be. If Chubby had been awake the very stillness would have frightened her. But she was asleep, tired out with running and with fright.

STORY 1653. May 29, 1917

Thump! Thump! Who are You?

How long Chubby Fox slept under the sheltering little hemlock tree in the Green Forest she never knew. It seemed to her that she had hardly closed her eyes when there was a terrible thump! thump! so close that it seemed right in her very ears. Her eyes flew wide open and her heart seemed to jump right up in her mouth. Of course it didn't do anything of the kind, but that is the way it seemed. For one little minute Chubby couldn't think where she was. Then she remembered that she was lost.

With eyes round and big with fright she peeped out under a branch of the little hemlock tree straight into another pair of eyes staring at her in surprise, and, if the truth be told, something of fright also. Chubby shivered a little with fear. Who could this strange creature be? He wasn't very big, but he was very queer, for his front legs were short and his hind legs were long. His very strangeness made Chubby afraid, for you know Chubby was very young and this was the first time she ever had seen Peter Rabbit, or any Rabbit for that matter.

Yes, that is who it was—Peter Rabbit. He had no business to be over in the Green Forest at that time of day. He should have been at home in the dear Old Brier Patch. But there he was. And it was Peter who had wakened Chubby by thumping the ground with his hind feet. You see Peter knew all about that little hemlock tree under which Chubby was hiding. He had sat under those low branches many times because they made just the kind of hiding place Peter likes. In fact, Peter had intended to rest there awhile this morning. He had poked his head under a branch before he discovered that someone was there. It startled him so that he jumped back so suddenly that he almost turned a back somersault. Then he scurried away a short distance before stopping to look back. Nobody came out after him. Peter sat up and watched that little hemlock tree a long time. Then curiosity got the best of him. He wanted to know who was there and what they were doing.

"Whoever it is can't be very dangerous or they would have come out after me before this," thought Peter, and hopped a few steps nearer. Then he sat up again and stared with all his might. "Probably whoever it is is asleep," thought Peter, and he hopped a few steps nearer. Then he sat up again and stared with all his might.

"That's my hiding-place and no one else has any right there," muttered Peter, trying to look very fierce, and hopped a few steps nearer. Then he sat up again and stared with all his might.

So at last Peter got back where he I could peep under the little hemlock tree. All he could make out was a little yellowish ball of woolly fur. The very look of that woolly fur told Peter that whoever was asleep there was little more than a baby and at that Peter became very brave. He stamped the ground fiercely. Thump! thump! stamped Peter. When Chubby's eyes flew open and Peter saw the fright in them what little fear he had remaining left him. He felt very bold and brave.

"Who are you?" he demanded. "Who are you and what are you doing in my hiding-place?" Peter stamped again, and at the sound Chubby scrambled to her feet. Then she began to back away. Once more Peter stamped, and this time Chubby turned and ran. Then Peter saw that she was a little Fox and knew that she was one of the children of Reddy Fox. He looked this way and that way hastily to make sure that neither Reddy nor Mrs. Reddy was near, then once more thumped, and chuckled to see Chubby run. Peter should have been ashamed of himself, but I'm afraid he wasn't. He couldn't forget how many frights Reddy Fox had given him, and so it tickled him to be able to frighten a member of Reddy's family, even if it was a very little member.

STORY 1654. May 30, 1917

Chatterer the Red Squirrel Teases Chubby

Peter Rabbit watched Chubby, the lost baby of Reddy Fox, run away in fright. Away among the trees of the Green Forest she ran, glancing behind her fearfully. Peter Rabbit had a funny feeling as he watched. He suddenly felt very big and brave. He felt what is sometimes called chesty. That means that he felt all swollen up with a sense of his own importance. He, Peter Rabbit, actually had frightened a Fox. To be sure, it was a very small Fox, but just the same it was a Fox. Somehow Peter wasn't sorry for that little lost Fox. No, sir, he wasn't the least bit sorry, and this wasn't at all like Peter. Perhaps it was because he knew that if Chubby should grow up and continue to live in the Green Forest, she would pay him back for this fright many, many times over.

Poor little Chubby! She didn't know what a disgraceful thing she was doing in running away from a Rabbit. It was well for her that her father, Reddy Fox, didn't see her. I am afraid he never would have gotten over it. But it wasn't that Chubby was a coward. O dear, no. If she had been at home and Peter had suddenly appeared I suspect that she wouldn't have run a step, not a single step. In fact, I suspect that Peter would have been the one to run. But she wasn't at home. She was lost—lost in the Green Forest, and her little heart was filled with the terror of loneliness and helplessness. She had been wakened from sleep by Peter's fierce stamping and she hadn't known what it was. Peter's thumps sometimes sound very threatening, you know. Her eyes had flown open to see a creature wholly new to her. And so, not knowing that he was harmless, Chubby had run away.

Whimpering miserably Chubby ran on among the great trees and/so presently came to the Lone Little Path. It reminded her in a way of the little paths in the Old Pasture, and she turned and trotted along the Lone Little Path, not knowing where it led to, but hoping it led somewhere away from the Green Forest, which seemed to her

such a fearsome place. She had gone only a few steps when, right over her head, there broke out such a racket. Chubby looked up and there in a tree was a little person in a coat very much the color of her father's. This small, red-coated person was seemingly in a great rage about something and his tongue fairly flew. He was too small to fear and Chubby stopped to stare at him in round-eyed wonder. You see, she never before had seen anyone but birds in a tree, and she didn't know what to make of it as Chatterer the Red Squirrel, for, of course, that is who it was, ran up and down the trunk of the tree and jumped from limb to limb.

All the time Chatterer's tongue was going so fast that the words tripped over each other. He saw right away that Chubby was alone. He guessed who she was and he guessed that she was lost. Now Chatterer had no love for Reddy the Fox and he just couldn't miss such a chance to tease and torment one of Reddy's children. He ran down the trunk of the tree until he was only just out of reach if Chubby should try to catch him and he was so excited that he jerked his tail so fast and so hard that Chubby wondered it didn't break off.

"What are you doing in the Green Forest?" demanded Chatterer angrily. "You don't belong here. Go home, where you do belong and keep away from honest people."

How some of Chatterer's neighbors would have smiled to have heard that, for you know Chatterer is a thief and a rogue if ever there was one.

"Go home! Go home! Go home!" scolded Chatterer and came down a little lower.

Chubby began to grow angry. She would teach this saucy, impudent rascal a lesson. Besides she was getting hungry and he looked as if he would make very good eating. Chubby crouched and when Chatterer came a wee bit lower, she sprang at him. Like a flash Chatterer was on the other side of the tree.

"Thief! Sneak! Coward!" he shrieked, peeping around the trunk and snapping his eyes at her and jerking his tail angrily. Then he called her every bad thing he could think of, all the time dancing about just out of reach. Chubby backed away and sat down. Chatterer came down and raced across right in front of her to the next tree. Chubby, being young and knowing no better, tried to catch him. This was great sport for Chatterer and he kept it up. He kept it up until Chubby quite lost her temper.

STORY 1655. May 31, 1917

Chubby Gets Some Sound Advice

Sound advice when it is needed
Smooths the way if it is heeded.

Chatterer the Red Squirrel never is happier than when he is making some one uncomfortable. So Chatterer was having a splendid time as he teased and tormented poor little Chubby, the lost baby of Reddy Fox. Chatterer was, I am sorry to say, really hateful. Like most of the smaller people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows he has no love for Reddy Fox, and so he just couldn't help being mean to one of Reddy's

family.

At last Chubby grew tired of trying to catch Chatterer. She began to see that she hadn't the least chance of catching him. She had been so busy trying to catch him that she had forgotten her troubles, but now the memory of them came back to her and she decided that she wanted nothing in the world so much as to find her home again. So without another look at Chatterer, she suddenly started on down the Lone Little Path.

But Chatterer wasn't to be got rid of so easily as that. He followed, jumping from tree to tree, and all the time making a dreadful racket as he called her names and said all the mean things he could think of. It made Chubby nervous. She began to fear that he would bring others to find her, some of whom might be dangerous.

So Chubby grew more and more nervous and kept her eyes open for a place to hide. But, of course, there were no hiding-places in the Lone Little Path. Of course not. Chubby realized this after a little and left the Lone Little Path but kept near enough to it to be able to find it again if she should want to.

At last, she came to a hole in the ground. It looked like a very old and tumble-down house which hadn't been lived in for a long time.

"I'll crawl in there and wait until that saucy fellow grows tired and goes away," said she, and in she popped without first finding out if that old house was as deserted as it looked.

Right down the long hall Chubby went and she had almost reached the bedroom at the end when she heard something that made her stop and that set her heart to thumping pitapat, pitapat. Then she backed out a great deal faster than she had gone in, and hardly was she outside than with angry little grunts someone else came out after her. It was someone in a handsome coat of black and white. It was Jimmy Skunk. Yes, sir, it was Jimmy Skunk.

It was plain to see that Jimmy was quite put out that anyone should have dared to come into his house. To be sure, it wasn't his regular house. It was one that he used once in a while when he happened to be that way and wanted a nap. But this made no difference to Jimmy. He was just as angry as if it had been his regular house. When he got outside and had blinked so that he could see better, all his anger left him. What he saw was a very frightened little Fox who looked so helpless and so scared that Jimmy just couldn't stay angry.

"Hello!" said he, "What are you doing here all alone?"

"If you please," replied Chubby, in a very small voice, "I didn't mean any harm. I didn't know you were in there." Jimmy grinned. "Let me give you some advice," said he, good-naturedly. "Babies like you have no business away from their own doorsteps. I suspect you have run away, and that being so, you have got to look out for yourself. Never go into any place you don't know about. Never be found in bad company."

He looked up at Chatterer the Red Squirrel when he said this and Chatterer made a face at him.

“Never let other people think you are afraid, even when you are. And never fail to be polite to strangers,” he went on. “Now if you know the way home, I advise you to go there as quickly as you can and tell mother that you are sorry. If you don’t know the way home, I advise you to go into the first hollow log you find that no one else is in and wait there until your mother finds you.” With this Jimmy turned around and disappeared in his old house to finish This nap.

“My, but you got off easy!” jeered Chatterer.

STORY 1656. June 1, 1917

Chubby Makes a Prickly Acquaintance

It really was a very beautiful day, a day when everybody should have been happy. But always there is some unhappiness even on the loveliest days. Chubby, the disobedient baby of Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy, was not happy. She was very unhappy. In fact, she was very, very miserable. She hadn’t dreamed that anyone could be so miserable. There she was lost in the Green Forest, so frightened that it seemed to her that her heart was in her throat most of the time, and all because she had been headstrong and willful and had disobeyed her mother by going out of sight of home when she had been charged not to.

The great world she had been so anxious to see no longer seemed a wonderful place. It was a dreadful place filled with dreadful people. There was Peter Rabbit, who thumped the ground so fiercely. How it would have tickled Peter could he have known that someone actually thought him fierce. And there was Chatterer the Red Squirrel, who teased her and tormented her and said such horrid things to her. And there was Jimmy Skunk, who preached to her when she didn’t want preaching but sympathy. No, Chubby didn’t like the great world at all, nor the people in the great world.

When Chubby left the old house in which Jimmy Skunk had disappeared to resume the nap she had broken by heedlessly trying to find a hiding place there without first making sure that it was empty she hurried away looking very much ashamed. She didn’t know where she was going any more than she had known before. All she could think of was to get away from that spot as far as she could. Chatterer the Red Squirrel still followed, jeering and scolding at her, but now she took no notice of him. After, a little he gave it up. It was no longer fun. So she learned that the best way to get rid of unpleasant people is to take no notice of them.

When Chatterer gave up and went about his business, the Green Forest once more became very still save for now and then the sighing of a pine tree or the faint whispering of maple and beech leaves. This stillness was almost harder to bear than the noisy tongue of Chatterer because it made Chubby feel so very, very much alone. Presently she began to whimper again as she hurried on. She was sure that she never, never would see home or her father and mother or her sisters and brothers again. She was sure that all there was for her to do was to run on and on forever.

Abruptly Chubby stopped. She stopped so suddenly that one little black foot was

lifted for a step. Just ahead of her there was the strangest noise. It was the rustling sound very different from any sound Chubby had heard before. With her eyes popping right out of her head with fear and wonder Chubby stood staring straight ahead and it seemed to her that this time her heart had come up clear into her mouth. She was too frightened to run, so she just stood perfectly still and stared toward the place from which that strange, fearsome sound seemed to come.

In a moment or two there came from behind a little hemlock-tree the strangest creature. Chubby almost thought she must be having a bad dream. It was very much bigger than she and there wasn't much shape to it. It was Just a walking mass of hair and what looked like very long and sharp thorns pointing all ways. It was Prickly Porky the Porcupine.

Chubby gave a little gasp and turned to run.

"What's the matter?" grunted Prickly Porky. "I won't hurt you as long as you don't touch me. Where's your mama?"

In spite of their dullness there was a kindly twinkle in his eyes.

"If you please, I don't know," whimpered Chubby.

"Huh! Must be you have run away," grunted Prickly Porky. "Did it myself once when I was little. Then I wished I hadn't. By the looks of you, you must be one of the children of Reddy Fox. You look like him. You've got the same nose and mouth and ears. You certainly do favor your father. Am I right?"

"Yes, sir," replied Chubby, very politely.

STORY 1657. June 2, 1917

Chubby Discovers Friendliness

Friendliness that's unexpected
  Is like sunshine by the way,
For it cheers the heavy-hearted
  And makes bright the saddest day.

If you don't believe that just try it. Just be friendly to someone who is in need of friendliness and see what a difference it makes. Sometimes you will find that the very gruffest people are really the most friendly. That is the way it was with Prickly Porky the Porcupine when he met Chubby, the lost little Fox. Prickly Porky's voice was a grunt. And certainly he was the roughest looking fellow that ever was. He was so rough-looking that Chubby would have run away at the first glimpse of him but for one thing—she was too frightened to run.

But, despite his rough appearance and his gruff, grunting voice, Prickly Porky proved to be friendly, and friendliness was the one thing Chubby needed just then. She was afraid of this queer old fellow, but it was good to be talked to and not at the same time be tormented and scolded and made fun of as had been the case with Chatterer the

Red Squirrel.

"Your father never has liked me," continued Prickly Porky with what he intended for a smile, but which made him look worse than ever because it showed his great front teeth, and to Chubby they had a dangerous look. "No, sir, Reddy Fox never has seemed to like me. Fact is, he is afraid of me, but don't like to admit it. I've noticed, my dear, that fear is something no one likes to admit. Now, I never hurt anybody who leaves me alone. You're afraid of me. I can see it in your eyes. But you needn't be. As long as you don't get in my way you needn't be the least bit afraid of me. Now tell me all about how it happens you are here and don't know where your home is or where your parents are."

Chubby hung her head. "I—I—" she began and then stopped.

Prickly Porky chuckled. "Just as I thought," grunted he. "You ran away."

"I didn't exactly run away. I didn't mean to run away. I got lost," said Chubby, finding her tongue.

"Same thing," grunted Prickly Porky. "You thought yourself big enough to see some of the great world. You thought it would be easy enough to run back home whenever you wanted to. And so you stole away and then the first thing you knew you were lost. O, I know all about it. I've seen other heedless youngsters in the same trouble you're in, lots of 'em."

Somehow that made Chubby feel better. "Did they find their homes again?" she asked, timidly.

Some of them did and some of them didn't," replied Prickly Porky. "It all depended on how much real sense they had in their heads. Have you got some real sense in your head?"

This was such a surprising question that Chubby didn't know what to answer. "I—I don't know," she ventured at last.

"Because, if you have," continued Prickly Porky, grinning good naturedly, "you will stop running and stay right here until you are found. As I said before, you needn't be afraid of me, and while I am about you needn't be afraid of anybody else. There's an old hollow log over there just about your size. I'd crawl in that and rest awhile if I were in your place. Sooner or later your father or your mother will come here to look for you. They know where I am and they'll come to ask if I have seen anything of you. Now run along and take a nap in that hollow log. I'll be right up in this tree and nothing will harm you."

With this Prickly Porky began to climb a tree and Chubby watched him with her mouth gaping open foolishly. It hadn't entered her head that such a clumsy looking fellow could climb. Then she took his advice and crawled in the hollow log. Somehow, she felt ever so much better. It was all because of Prickly Porky's friendliness.

STORY 1658. June 4, 1917

Illustrations. May 28 to June 2, 1917.

1652. Chubby is More Frightened Than Ever
All about her were trees.

1653. Thump! Thump! Who are You?
Once more Peter stamped. And this time, Chubby turned and ran.

1654. Chatterer the Red Squirrel Teases Chubby
"What are you doing in the Green Forest?" demanded Chatterer.

1655. Chubby Gets Some Sound Advice
"Hello!" said he. "What are you doing here all alone?"

1656. Chubby Makes a Prickly Acquaintance
"What's the matter?" grunted Prickly Porky.

1657. Chubby Discovers Friendliness
"Your father never has liked me," continued Prickly Porky.

Chubby's Mother Discovers Her Loss

While Chubby Fox was having such a dreadful time lost in the Green Forest, things were happening at home, the home in the Old Pasture from which she had wandered away. You remember that Chubby hadn't intended to run away. All she had intended to do was to go a little way to see something of the Great World and then run home again before her mother should return and find out that she had been disobedient. And you remember that Chubby's brother, Dusky, had tried to keep her from disobeying and that Chubby had said that if Dusky kept his tongue still and didn't tell her mother would never know.

It just happened that the hunting was very poor that morning, so that Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy were away from home longer than usual. In fact, they were away some time longer than usual. Mrs. Reddy was first to return. Dusky and Cutie were sitting on the doorstep watching for her. Stubby was down inside of the house. At the sound of the mother's voice Stubby came tumbling out. Now Mrs. Reddy had brought back only three small mice so when Chubby didn't appear with Stubby, Mrs. Reddy was rather glad of it. She gave each of the others a mouse and sat down to watch the three youngsters eat their breakfast. It would be time enough to call Chubby out when Reddy Fox should return with something for her to eat.

But after a while Mrs. Reddy thought it queer that Chubby didn't come out. It wasn't at all like Chubby not to be on hand when there was any eating going on. While the three youngsters were busy with their breakfast their mother went into the house to see what Chubby was doing. In a minute she was out again.

"Where is your sister?" she demanded sharply.

Dusky looked at Cutie and Cutie looked at Stubby, and no one answered. "Where is your sister?" their mother demanded again, more sharply than before, and she looked straight at Dusky. Now, Dusky didn't want to be a tell-tale, so he replied truthfully enough: "I don't know."

Mrs. Reddy looked at him sharply. Dusky dropped his eyes. His mother knew by that that he knew something and she guessed right away that while he was trying to be truthful, he was also trying to keep something from her. She knew that Chubby wasn't in the house and if she wasn't in the house she had disobeyed and gone beyond sight of the house. Either she was hiding or else she had wandered away.

"Which way did she go?" demanded Mrs. Reddy. Dusky knew by the tone of her voice that there was no use in pretending that he didn't know. There was nothing for him to do but to tell the truth.

"She went that way," said he, pointing with his funny little black nose in the direction Chubby had taken. "She said she wouldn't go far," he added.

"Go into the house, all of you, and don't one of you put your nose outside until I return!" snapped Mrs. Reddy.

The three little Foxes obediently trotted into the house. Their mother watched until

she was sure that they were way down down inside. Then she bounded away with her nose to the ground to try to find the scent of Chubby's feet, and her sharp, crafty face wore such an anxious, worried look as only a mother's face can have. You see she knew just what had happened. She knew that Chubby was lost, and she was afraid, terribly afraid, that something might have happened to her.

STORY 1659. June 5, 1917

The Search for Chubby

When Mrs. Reddy Fox started out top look for poor little lost Chubby, the fattest of her four children, it didn't take her long to find where Chubby had been. Her keen nose, always to the ground, would catch a bit of scent here and a bit of scent there. Being such a very small Fox, Chubby hadn't left a lot of scent as an older Fox would have done. Besides, it was some time since she had been along, and scent, like perfume, grows fainter and fainter until there is none.

So it wasn't at all easy for her mother to follow Chubby's wanderings. But by keeping at it persistently Mrs. Reddy followed the twists and turns Chubby's wandering little feet had made in the Old Pasture, and she knew just as well as if she had been there to see everything that Chubby had done. She knew that here Chubby had caught a beetle and there she had tried to catch a mouse but had failed. And so at last Mrs. Reddy came to the place where Chubby had first discovered that she was lost.

"The poor child!" murmured Mrs. Reddy. "She was frightened almost to death when she found out that she didn't know the way home. Here is where she began to run, and I expect she almost ran her legs off. And instead of being headed toward home she was headed right the other way." Now and then Mrs. Reddy would lose the trail, for at times it was so very faint that even her keen nose could find it only by slow and careful work. These delays made Mrs. Reddy very impatient, for, you know, she was dreadfully worried. Any mother would have been. Whenever she lost the trail, she would run in circles with her nose to the ground until she found the trail again.

So at last Mrs. Reddy came to the bullbrier castle of Old Jed Thumper, the big gray Rabbit, who was the father of little Mrs. Peter Rabbit. Old Jed Thumper was peeping out through the brambles and he chuckled as he saw Mrs. Reddy and the worried look on her face. He wasn't sorry for her a bit. No, sir, he wasn't sorry for her a bit. That wasn't nice of him, but I don't know as we should blame him. You see, Reddy and Old Granny Fox used to hunt him so much that he had to keep his ears open and his wits working all the time to keep a whole skin. Then had come Mrs. Reddy to make things harder still. But Old Jed Thumper had begun to think that he hadn't known what it was to be hunted until after the arrival of Reddy's and Mrs. Reddy's babies. Since they arrived, he had been hunted so much by Reddy and Mrs. Reddy that he had grown so nervous that he would try to jump away from his own shadow when he happened to see it over his shoulder.

So Old Jed Thumper chuckled as he watched Mrs. Reddy pass his bull-brier castle with such a worried look. He had seen Chubby pass that way long before and he had

hoped then that she would lose herself so that she never would be found and he hadn't changed his mind since.

Mrs. Reddy saw him peeping at her through the brambles and she had it on the tip of her tongue to ask him if he had seen Chubby pass that way, but she didn't.

"It wouldn't do any good," thought she. "It wouldn't do the least bit of good. He wouldn't tell me if he had seen her."

So she merely gave him a look and hurried on.

So at last, she came to the place where the Old Pasture and the Green Forest meet and she knew then that Chubby was somewhere in the Green Forest. This made her more anxious than ever, for there were more dangers for a little Fox in the Green Forest than in the Old Pasture; also, there were few bramble-tangles under which a little Fox could crawl, and few hiding places, unless you knew just where to look for them, and, of course, Chubby didn't know this. So Mrs. Reddy was greatly worried.

But worried as she was, it was nothing to what she was to worry.

STORY 1660. June 6, 1917

Mrs. Reddy Hears a Dreadful Sound

It's not of self that mother thinks
  When danger it may chance is near;
It's not of self at all, you'll find.
  But just of YOU she thinks, my dear.

So it was with Mrs. Reddy Fox as she hunted for Chubby, the heedless and willful, who had wandered away from the home in the Old Pasture and was lost. And so it is with all the mothers in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows and in the Old Orchard and about the Smiling Pool. From the biggest to the very smallest, from the strongest to the weakest, from the most fearless to the most timid, they all forget self when there is danger near their children.

It was just after Mrs. Reddy reached the place where the Old Pasture and the Green Forest join and she knew by the direction in which Chubby's trail led that Chubby must have gone into the Green Forest, that she heard a most dreadful sound. It was a sound that sent chills of fear all over Mrs. Reddy. It seemed to her the most dreadful sound she ever heard in all her life. It was not fear for self that made those shivers run all over her or that made that sound so much more dreadful than any she ever had heard before. In fact, she had heard that very same sound many times before and had merely laughed at it. Then it had not seemed dreadful to her at all.

What was that dreadful sound? Haven't you guessed? It was the voice of Bowser the Hound. Yes, sir, that is just what it was—the voice of Bowser the Hound. And the reason it sounded so dreadful, and that chills ran all over her as she listened to it, was because she had a terrible suspicion that Bowser had found the trail of Chubby and was following it. She knew that if this were so poor little Chubby would be quite helpless,

for she was too young to understand the danger or to know how to fool Bowser if she did understand the danger.

"Bow, wow, w-o-w, o-w-o-w" sounded Bowser's voice. Anyone would have known right away that Bowser was both pleased and excited, which is only another way of saying that he had found a trail which he could follow and which was so freshly made that he felt sure of catching up with the maker of it. And anyone who heard it as Mrs. Reddy did would have understood what Bowser was saying.

"Fox! Fox! F-o-x! F-o-x! Fox! Fox!" roared Bowser.

Mrs. Reddy stood stock still and listened. It might, it just might, be that Bowser had found the trail of Reddy Fox and was chasing him. Mrs. Reddy hoped with all her might that this was true, for she had no fears for Reddy's safety. She knew that if it were he when he grew tired, he would be smart enough to make Bowser lose the trail. But she had only to listen a minute or two to know that it wasn't Reddy. She could tell by the way that Bowser was following the trail that no grown Fox ever made it. It must be that he had found Chubby's trail! The mother heart in Mrs. Reddy throbbed painfully and she leaped forward and began to run as never she had run before in all her life. Was she running away from that dreadful sound? Not a bit of it. No siree! She was running straight toward it, and she was running so fast that it seemed as if her feet hardly touched the ground. You remember that she had been called Miss Swiftfoot before she became Mrs. Reddy, and now she was proving how well that name had suited her.

STORY 1661. June 7, 1917

Mother Reddy's Bravery

On and on ran Mother Reddy as fast as ever she could put her feet to the ground, and all the time the sound of Bowser's great voice was louder and louder. You see, instead of running away from him she was running toward him as fast as she could. That is just what she was doing, and all the time hoping and hoping that she would reach him before he should find Chubby, her lost darling, and all the time fearing and fearing that she wouldn't.

But she did. Between the tree trunks she caught a glimpse of Bowser with his nose to the ground galloping along on what she knew must be Chubby's trail. Mrs. Reddy swung about in a circle so as to run around and come in ahead of Bowser. Then, panting a little because she had run so fast, she sat right down in plain sight. On came Bowser and still Mrs. Reddy didn't move. Nearer and nearer he drew, but he was so intent on following his nose that he didn't use his eyes at all. He made the Green Forest ring with the sound of his great voice and Mrs Reddy knew just how poor little Chubby must be feeling as she listened to it drawing nearer and nearer and knew not what to do.

So intent was Bowser on Chubby's trail that I don't know but what he would have run right into Mrs Reddy if she had sat still long enough. As it was she waited until he was only a few feet away. Then she got up and slowly trotted off, all the time looking

back over her shoulder to watch Bowser. Along came Bowser to the spot where she had been sitting, and the instant he got there and his nose touched the spot his voice grew twice as eager and excited as before. You see, the scent was very strong and told him that it had been left there only a very short time before. Bowser threw his head up to bark, and In doing so he caught sight of something red moving just ahead of him. One good look told him that it was a Fox, and without a single thought of whether or not it was the one whose trail he had been so patiently working out he was off after Mrs Reddy.

Once sure that he was following her Mrs Reddy sighed happily. You see, she meant to lead Bowser far away from that part of the Green Forest and then mix her trail so that he would be fooled and no longer be able to follow her. Then she would hurry back to follow Chubby's trail and try to find her. It was dreadful not to be able to keep right, on now and find the lost darling, but it made her very happy to think that she was in time to lead Bowser away,

"What a lucky thing, what a very lucky thing it is that I got back home when I did! If I had been any later, it might have been too late for me to save Chubby. I wonder where Reddy is. If he were only here now, he could take care of this silly dog and that would leave me free to hunt for Chubby. What a silly dog he is, any way, to make such a racket. Still, I'm glad he does. If he followed a trail silently as Reddy Fox and I do, I wouldn't have known he was after Chubby. I hope his master isn't about. I hadn't thought of him. O, dear, I do hope his master is nowhere about. If he should find Chubby, I don't know what I should do. I must get rid of this dog as soon as I can, for I shall not have a minute of peace until I find my baby and know that nothing has happened to her."

And so Mrs. Reddy led Bowser the Hound away from that part of the Green Forest where Chubby was and planned how she would fool him as soon as she felt it would be quite safe.

STORY 1662. June 8, 1917

Reddy Fox Helps Out

Reddy Fox knew nothing about what had happened at his home in the Old Pasture. He knew nothing about willful little Chubby and the trouble she had made for herself and for her mother by wandering away and then getting wholly lost. Reddy had been over to a certain henyard watching for a chance to catch a chicken. It wasn't Farmer Brown's henyard that Reddy had been watching. O, no! No, indeed! He was altogether too smart to steal chickens quite so near his own home, especially as he knew that Farmer Brown's boy had been that way and might have seen that home. So when Reddy thought his youngsters needed a chicken, he went a long way to get one.

Early this morning he had started out on just this errand. When he had reached the chicken yard he had had to wait so long that his patience was very near to giving out. But at last a chicken had come within reach. Two minutes later Reddy was trotting toward home with a good breakfast for those hungry youngsters. As he crossed one

edge of the Green Meadows he suddenly paused, his sharp ears cocked forward as he listened. Out from the Green Forest came a sound he knew full well. It was the voice of Bowser the Hound.

"Now, what has that nuisance found, or what does he think he's found?" muttered Reddy as he scowled toward the Green Forest. "This is no time of year for him to be hunting. I believe I'll wait a while before going home. He might just happen to find my track or Mrs. Reddy's and it would never do to have him find our home that way."

So Reddy squatted down in the long grass to be out of sight, and his keen ears told him almost as much as his eyes could have told him had he been where he could see Bowser and what he was doing. You remember that when Bowser came to the spot where Mrs. Reddy had been sitting and his nose was filled with the strong scent of her he began to bark as fast he could. There was eagerness and excitement in his voice as he raced ahead after Mrs. Reddy. It sounded very different from what it had as he tried to work out and follow Chubby's trail.

Of course, Reddy noticed the difference at once. He sat up and looked eagerly toward the Green Forest. There was no doubt in his mind that Bowser was on the fresh trail of a Fox. As he himself hadn't been over in the Green Forest that day, and as he was very sure and there were no stranger Foxes about, it must be that Bowser had found the trail of either old Granny Fox or Mrs. Reddy.

"If it's Granny, I don't care," muttered Reddy as he looked and listened. "She is quite able to take care of herself. But it is a different matter if it is Mrs. Reddy he is chasing. She has got enough to worry her without being chased by that bothersome dog. Ha! It IS Mrs Reddy! I think I'll have to help her out."

First hiding the chicken under some long grass Reddy ran swiftly in a direction to get him ahead of Bowser. In a minute or two Mrs. Reddy came in sight. Reddy joined her and as they ran she told him of Chubby's loss and how she, Mrs. Reddy, had found Bowser the Hound following Chubby's trail and just in time had led him away on her trail.

"Turn over to the Laughing Brook," commanded Reddy. "When you reach a shallow place cross the brook. I'll take care of this silly dog while you find Chubby and take her back home."

Mrs. Reddy turned toward the Laughing Brook and Reddy dropped back behind her, running in her tracks with his nose almost touching the snowy tip of her bushy tail.

STORY 1663. June 9, 1917

Chubby's Troubles End

Of all things good and all things bad
Sometime an ending will be had.

Of this you may be absolutely sure. So when you feel that you are in a peck of trouble just remember this and feel sure that it will end some time. Chubby, the lost

little Fox, trying to get a nap in a hollow log in the Green Forest, wasn't old enough to know this great truth. Ever since things had started wrong when she disobeyed her mother and went out of sight of the dear home in the Old Pasture they had continued to go wrong.

Presently Chubby heard a sound different from any sound she ever had heard before and somehow it filled her heart with a great fear. She didn't know just what she feared, but she feared something because of that dreadful voice. She got up, poked her head but of the hollow log, looking very uneasy and frightened. Prickly Porky looked down from a tree where he was making his breakfast of bark and saw her.

"What's the matter?" he grunted.

"If you please, will you tell me what hat dreadful noise is? It seems to be coming nearer," said Chubby.

"That, O, that's the voice of Bowser the Hound," replied Prickly Porky.

"I thought everybody knew that when they heard it." Prickly Porky had forgotten how young Chubby was and how little she knew of the Great World.

"Who is Bowser the Hound? He seems very dreadful. Aren't you afraid of him?" asked Chubby.

"Me afraid of Bowser the Hound! Ha! ha! Ho! ho! Me afraid of Bowser the Hound!" Prickly Porky seemed to think this a great joke, but what the joke was Chubby couldn't see. Then suddenly it came to Prickly Porky that while he had no reason to fear Bowser the Hound, there was every reason for Chubby to.

"You go back in that hollow log," grunted Prickly Porky, "and stay there. That voice isn't going to hurt you. A voice never yet hurt anyone. I'm coming down just to teach that silly dog a lesson. I don't like to have him making such a noise around where I am. When he gets here and sees me, he won't stop long. Now do as I tell you and don't be worried or scared."

Prickly Porky began to climb down slowly. He always is slow, you know. Before he reached the ground Bowser's voice stopped coming nearer and began to sound farther away. That was when he began to chase Mrs. Reddy and she led him away. By and by Bowser's voice was so faint it could hardly be heard and then pretty soon it couldn't be heard. Prickly Porky grunted and climbed back up on the tree to resume his dinner.

Meanwhile Reddy Fox was leading Bowser far, far away. He had run behind Mrs. Reddy until she reached the Laughing Brook. This she had waded across, but Reddy had remained until Bowser actually came in sight. Then off Reddy had run and Bowser after him, not once guessing that Reddy wasn't the same Fox he had been chasing all the time. Just as soon as the way was clear Mrs. Reddy hurried back to where she last found Chubby's trail, and there after sniffing and snuffing about for some time she had found it again.

Then she followed it until at last, she came to the hollow log in which Chubby

had fallen asleep. So when Chubby's little eyes flew open at a soft bark It was to find her troubles at an end, for there was mother to show her the way home and to keep her from all harm.

"I'll never, never, never disobey again!" cried Chubby, as she snuggled up to her mother.

Prickly Porky looked down and chuckled. "All children are alike," he grunted.

STORY 1664. June 11, 1917

Jimmy Skunk and Unc' Billy Possum Meet

Jimmy Skunk ambled along down the Lone Little Path through the Green Forest. He didn't hurry. Jimmy never does hurry. Hurrying and worrying are two things he leaves for his neighbors. Now and then, Jimmy stopped to turn over a bit of bark or a stick, hoping to find some fat beetles. But it was plain to see that he had something besides fat beetles on his mind.

Up the Lone Little Path through the Green Forest shuffled Unc' Billy Possum. He didn't hurry. It was too warm to hurry. Unlike Jimmy Skunk, he does hurry sometimes, does Unc' Billy, especially when he suspects that Bowser the Hound is about. And sometimes Unc' Billy does worry. You see, there are people who think that Unc' Billy would make a very good dinner. Unc' Billy doesn't think he would. Anyway, he has no desire to have the experiment tried, and so occasionally, when he discovers one of these people who think he would make a good dinner, he worries a little.

But just now Unc' Billy was neither hurrying nor worrying. There was no need of doing either, and Unc' Billy never does anything that there is no need of doing. So Unc' Billy shuffled up the Lone Little Path, and Jimmy Skunk ambled down the Lone Little Path, and right at a bend in the Lone Little Path they met.

Jimmy Skunk grinned. "Hello, Unc' Billy!" said he. "Have you seen any fat beetles this morning?"

Unc' Billy grinned in his turn. "Good mo'nin', Brer Skunk," he replied. "Ah can't rightly say Ah have. Ah had it on mah mind to ask yo' the same thing."

Jimmy sat down and looked at Unc' Billy with twinkling eyes. His grin grew broader and became a chuckle. "Unc' Billy," said he, "have you ever in your life combed your hair or brushed your coat?" You know Unc' Billy usually looks as if every hair was trying to point in a different direction from every other hair, while Jimmy Skunk always appears as neat as if he spent half his time brushing and smoothing his handsome black and white coat.

Unc' Billy's eyes twinkled. "Ah reckons Ah did such a thing once or twice when Ah was very small, Brer Skunk," said he, without a trace of a smile. "But it seems to me a powerful waste of time. Ah have mo' important things to worry about. By the way, Brer Skunk, did yo' ever run away from anybody in all your life?"

Illustrations. June 4 to June 9, 1917.

1658. Chubby's Mother Discovers Her Loss
"Where is your sister?" she demanded sharply.

1659. The Search for Chubby
He wasn't sorry for her a bit.

1660. Mrs. Reddy Hears a Dreadful Sound
Mrs. Reddy stood stock still and listened.

1661. Mother Reddy's Bravery
Once sure that he was following her, Mrs. Reddy sighed happily.

1662. Reddy Fox Helps Out
"Now what has that nuisance found, or what does he think he's found?" muttered Reddy.

1663. Chubby's Troubles End
"What's the matter?" he grunted.

Jimmy looked surprised at the question. He scratched his head thoughtfully. "Not that I remember of," said he after a little. "Most folks run away from me," he added with a little throaty chuckle. "Those who don't run away always are polite and step aside. It may be that when I was a very little fellow and didn't know much about the Great World and the people who live in it, I might have run away from someone, but if I did, I can't remember it. Why do you ask, Unc' Billy?"

"Oh, no reason in particular, Brer Skunk. No reason in particular. Only Ah wonder sometimes if yo' ever realize how lucky yo' are. If Ah never had to worry about mah hungry neighbors, Ah reckons perhaps Ah might brush mah coat oftener."

Unc' Billy's eyes twinkled more than ever.

"Worry," replied Jimmy Skunk sagely, "is the result of being unprepared. Anybody who is prepared has no occasion to worry. Just think it over, Unc' Billy."

It was Unc' Billy's turn to scratch his head thoughtfully. "Ah fear Ah don't quite get your meaning, Brer Skunk," said he.

"Sit down, Unc' Billy, and I'll explain," replied Jimmy.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 12)

STORY 1665[26]. June 12, 1917

Jimmy Skunk Explains

You'll find this true where'er you go
That those prepared few troubles know.

Jimmy Skunk had told Unc' Billy Possum that worry is usually the result of not being prepared, and that those who are prepared seldom have occasion to worry. When Unc' Billy said he was afraid he didn't quite get Jimmy's meaning, Jimmy told him to sit down and he would explain.

"To begin with, I am not such a very big fellow, am I?" said Jimmy.

"Ah reckons Ah knows a right smart lot of folks bigger than yo', Brer Skunk," replied Unc' Billy, with a grin. You know Jimmy Skunk really is a little fellow compared with some of his neighbors.

"And I haven't very long claws or very big teeth, have I?" continued Jimmy.

"Ah reckons mine are about as long and about as big," returned Unc' Billy, looking more puzzled than ever.

"But you never see anybody bothering me, do you?" went on Jimmy.

"No," replied Unc' Billy.

"And it's the same way with Prickly Porky the Porcupine. You never see anybody

26 See Burgess's article for the Vigilantes, "Jimmy Skunk and Jack Porcupine," in Appendix 1.

bothering him or offering to do him any harm, do you?" persisted Jimmy.

"No," replied Unc' Billy once more.

"Why?" demanded Jimmy.

Unc' Billy grinned broadly. "Ah reckons, Brer Skunk," said he, "that there isn't anybody wants to go fo' to meddle with yo' and Brer Porky. Ah reckons most folks knows what would happen if they did, and that yo' and Brer Porky are folks it's a sight mo' comfortable to leave alone. Leastways, Ah does. Ah ain't aiming fo' trouble with either of yo'. That li'l bag of scent yo' carry is cert'nly most powerful, Brer Skunk, and Ah isn't hankering to brush against those little spears Brer Porky is so free with. Ah knows when Ah's well off, and Ah reckons most folks feel the same way."

Jimmy Skunk chuckled. "One more question, Unc' Billy," said he. "Did you ever know me to pick a quarrel and use that bag of scent without being attacked?"

Unc' Billy considered for a few minutes. "Ah can't say Ah ever did," he replied.

"And you never knew Prickly Porky to go hunting trouble either," declared Jimmy. "We don't either of us go hunting trouble, and trouble never comes hunting us, and the reason is that we both are always prepared for trouble and everybody knows it. Buster Bear could squash me by just stepping on me, but he doesn't try it. You notice he always is very polite when we meet. Prickly Porky and I are armed for defense, but we never use our weapons for offense. Nobody bothers us, and we bother nobody. That's the beauty of being prepared."

Unc' Billy thought it over for a few minutes. Then he sighed and sighed again.

"Ah reckons yo' and Brer Porky are about the luckiest people Ah knows," said he. "Yes, Sah, Ah reckons yo' is just that. Ah don't fear anybody mah own size, but Ah cert'nly does have some mighty scary times when Ah meets some people Ah might mention. Ah wish Ol' Mother Nature had done gone and given me something fo' to make people as scary of me as they are of yo'. Ah cert'nly believes in preparedness after seein' yo', Brer Skunk. Ah cert'nly does just that very thing. Have yo' found any nice fresh aiggs lately?"

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 13)

STORY 1666. June 13, 1917

A Little Something about Eggs

"An egg," says Jimmy Skunk, "is dear;
  It's very good, indeed, to eat."
"An egg," says Mrs. Grouse, "is dear;
  'Twill hatch into a baby sweet."

So in the matter of eggs, as in a great many other matters, it all depends on the point of view. To Jimmy Skunk and Unc' Billy Possum, eggs are looked on from the viewpoint of something to eat. It is their stomachs that prompt them to think of eggs.

Eggs are good to fill empty stomachs. Yes, siree, they are splendid for that! The mere thought of eggs will make Jimmy and Unc' Billy smack their lips. They say they "love" eggs, but they don't. They "like" them, which is quite different.

But Mrs. Grouse and most of the other feathered people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows and the Old Orchard really do "love" eggs. It is the heart instead of the stomach that responds to the thought of eggs. To them eggs are almost as precious as babies, because they know that someday, someday very soon, those eggs will become babies. There are a few feathered folks, I am sorry to say, who "love" their own eggs, but "like" the eggs of other people—like them just as Jimmy Skunk and Unc' Billy Possum do, to eat. Blacky the Crow is one and his cousin, Sammy Jay, is another.

So in the springtime there is always a great deal of matching of wits between the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows and the Old Orchard, those who have eggs trying to keep them a secret or to build the nests that hold them where none who like to eat them can get them; and those who have an appetite for eggs try to find them.

When Unc' Billy Possum suddenly changed the subject by asking Jimmy Skunk if he had found any nice fresh eggs lately, he touched a subject very close to Jimmy's heart. I should have said, rather, his stomach. To tell the truth, it was a longing for some eggs that had brought Jimmy to the Green Forest. He knew that somewhere there Mrs. Grouse must be hiding a nestful of the very nicest of eggs, and it was to hunt for these that he had come.

"No," replied Jimmy, "I haven't had any luck at all this spring. I've almost forgotten what an egg tastes like. Either I'm growing dull and stupid, or some folks are smarter than they used to be. By the way, have you seen Mrs. Grouse lately?" Jimmy looked very innocent as he asked this.

Unc' Billy chuckled until his sides shook. "Do yo' suppose Ah'd tell yo' if Ah had?" he demanded. "Ah reckons Mrs. Grouse hasn't got any mo' aiggs than Ah could comfortably take care of mahself, not to mention Mrs. Possum." Here Unc' Billy looked back over his shoulder to make sure that old Mrs. Possum wasn't within hearing.

Jimmy Skunk chuckled.

"Seems to me, Brer Skunk, yo' might better do your aigg hunting on the Green Meadows and leave the Green Forest to me. That would be no mo' than fair. Yo' know Ah never did hanker fo' to get far away from trees, but yo' don't mind. Besides there are mo' aiggs for yo' to find on the Green Meadows than there are fo' me to find in the Green Forest. A right smart lot of birds make their nests on the ground there. There is Brer Bob White and Brer Meadowlark and Brer Bobolink and Brer Field Sparrow and Brer—"

"Never mind any more, Unc' Billy," interrupted Jimmy Skunk. "I know all about them. That is, I know all about them I want to know, except where their eggs are. Didn't I just tell you I haven't had any luck at all? That's why I'm over here."

"Well, yo' won't have any mo' luck here unless yo' are a right smart lot sharper than your Unc' Billy, and when it comes to hunting aiggs. Ah don't take mah hat off to anybody, not even to yo', Brer Skunk," replied Unc' Billy.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 14)

STORY 1667. June 14, 1917

Unc' Billy and Jimmy Skunk Meet Again

Jimmy Skunk couldn't think of anything but eggs. The more he thought of them, the more he wanted some. After parting from Unc' Billy Possum in the Green Forest he went back to the Green Meadows and prowled about, hunting for the nests of his feathered neighbors who build on the ground, and having no more luck than he had had before.

Unc' Billy Possum was faring about the same way. He couldn't, for the life of him, stop thinking about those eggs that belonged to Mrs. Grouse. The more he tried to forget about them, the more he thought about them.

"Ah feels it in mah bones that there isn't the least bit of use in huntin' fo' them," said he to himself, as he watched Jimmy Skunk amble out of sight up the Lone Little Path. "No, sah, there isn't the least bit of use. Ah done look every place Ah can think of already. Still, Ah haven't got anything else special on mah mind, and those aiggs cert'nly would taste good. Ah reckons it must be Ah needs those aiggs, or Ah wouldn't have them on mah mind so much. Ah finds it rather painful to carry aiggs on mah mind all the time, but Ah would enjoy carrying them in mah stomach. Ah cert'nly would."

Unc' Billy grinned and started to ramble about aimlessly, hoping that chance would lead him to the nest of Mrs. Grouse.

Chance did lead him there, but he didn't know it. It was rather a joke on Unc' Billy. He walked right past within three feet of where Mrs. Grouse was sitting on her eggs at the foot of a big tree. She didn't move so much as a feather and she looked so much like the brown leaves on the ground about her that Unc' Billy didn't see her at all[27].

Do what he would, Unc' Billy couldn't get the thought of eggs off his mind, and the more he thought about them the more he wanted some. And that led him to think of Farmer Brown's henhouse. He had long ago resolved never again to go there, but the longing for a taste of eggs was too much for his good resolutions, and as soon as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun sank to rest behind the Purple Hills, and the Black Shadows came creeping across the Green Meadows and through the Green Forest, Unc' Billy slipped away, taking pains that old Mrs. Possum shouldn't suspect where he was going.

Out from the Green Forest, keeping among the Black Shadows along by the old stone wall on the edge of the Old Orchard, he stole, and so at last he reached Farmer Brown's henhouse. He stopped to listen. There was no sign of Bowser the Hound, and Unc' Billy sighed gently. It was a sigh of relief. Then he crept around a corner of the

27 This paragraph was not included in *The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*.

henhouse towards a certain hole under it he remembered well. Just as he reached it, he saw something white. It moved. It was coming towards him from the other end of the henhouse. Unc' Billy stopped right where he was. He was undecided whether to run or stay. Then he heard a little grunt and decided to stay. He even grinned. A few seconds later up came Jimmy Skunk. It was a white stripe on Jimmy's coat that Unc' Billy had seen.

Jimmy gave a little snort of surprise when he almost bumped into Unc' Billy.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

"Just taking a li'l walk fo' the good of mah appetite," replied Unc' Billy, grinning more broadly than ever. "What are yo' doing here, Brer Skunk?"

"The same thing," replied Jimmy. Then he chuckled. "This is an unexpected meeting. I guess you must have had the same thing on your mind all day that I have," he added.

"Ah reckon so," replied Unc' Billy, and both grinned.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 15, "A Second Meeting")

STORY 1668. June 15, 1917

A Matter of Politeness

It costs not much to be polite
And, furthermore, it's always right.

Unc' Billy Possum and Jimmy Skunk, facing each other among the Black Shadows close by a hole that led under Farmer Brown's henhouse, chuckled as each thought of what had brought the other there. It is queer how a like thought often brings people together. Unc' Billy had the same longing in his stomach that Jimmy Skunk had, and Jimmy Skunk had the same thing on his mind that Unc' Billy had. More than this, it was the second time that day that they had met. They had met in the morning in the Green Forest and now they had met again among the Black Shadows of the evening at Farmer Brown's henhouse. And it was all on account of eggs. Yes, sir, it was all on account of eggs.

"Are you just coming out, or are you just going in?" Jimmy inquired politely.

"Ah was just going in, but Ah'll follow yo', Brer Skunk," replied Unc' Billy just as politely.

"Nothing of the kind," returned Jimmy. "I wouldn't for a minute think of going before you. I hope I know my manners better than that."

"Yo' cert'nly are most polite, Brer Skunk. Yo' cert'nly are most polite. Yo' are a credit to your bringing up, but politeness always did run in your family. There is a saying that han'some is as han'some does, and your politeness is as fine as yo' are han'some, Brer Skunk. Ah'll just step one side and let yo' go first just to show that Ah sh'lly does appreciate your friendship," said Unc' Billy.

Jimmy Skunk chuckled. “I guess you’ve forgotten that other old saying, ‘Age before beauty,’ Unc’ Billy,” said he. “So you go first. You know you are older than I. I couldn’t think of being so impolite as to go first. I really couldn’t think of such a thing.”

And so they argued and argued, each insisting in the most polite way that the other should go first. If the truth were known, neither of them was insisting out of politeness at all. No, sir, politeness had nothing to do with it. Jimmy Skunk wanted Unc’ Billy to go first because Jimmy believes in safety first, and it had popped into Jimmy’s head that there might, there just might, happen to be a trap inside that hole. If there was, he much preferred that Unc’ Billy should be the one to find it out. Yes, Sir, that is why Jimmy Skunk was so very polite.

Unc’ Billy wanted Jimmy to go first because he always feels safer behind Jimmy than in front of him. He has great respect for that little bag of scent that Jimmy carries, and he knows that when Jimmy makes use of it, he always throws it in front and never behind him. Jimmy seldom uses it, but sometimes he does if he happens to be startled and thinks danger near. So Unc’ Billy preferred that Jimmy should go first. It wasn’t politeness at all on the part of Unc’ Billy. In both cases it was a kind of selfishness. Each was thinking of self.

How long they would have continued to argue and try to appear polite if something hadn’t happened, nobody knows. But something did happen. There was a sudden loud sniff just around the corner of the henhouse. It was from Bowser the Hound. Right then and there Unc’ Billy Possum and Jimmy Skunk forgot all about politeness, and both tried to get through that hole at the same time. They couldn’t, because it wasn’t big enough, but they tried hard. Bowser sniffed again, and this time Unc’ Billy managed to squeeze Jimmy aside and slip through. Jimmy was right at his heels.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 16)

STORY 1669. June 16, 1917

Jimmy Skunk Gets a Bump on the Head

Hardly had Jimmy Skunk entered the hole under Farmer Brown’s henhouse, following close on the heels of Unc’ Billy Possum, than along came Bowser the Hound, sniffing and sniffing in a way that made Unc’ Billy nervous. When Bowser reached that hole, of course he smelled the tracks of Unc’ Billy and Jimmy, and right away he became excited. He began to dig. Goodness, how he did make the dirt fly! All the time he whined with eagerness.

Unc’ Billy wasted no time in squeezing through a hole in the floor way over in one corner, a hole that Farmer Brown’s boy had intended to nail a board over long before, but never had. Unc’ Billy knew that Bowser couldn’t get through that, even if he did manage to dig his way under the henhouse. Once through that and fairly in the henhouse, Unc’ Billy drew a long breath. He felt safe for the time being, anyway, and he didn’t propose to worry over the future.

Jimmy Skunk hurried after Unc’ Billy. It wasn’t fear. No, indeed, it wasn’t fear.

He had been startled by the unexpectedness of Bowser's appearance. It was this that had caused him to struggle to be first through that hole under the henhouse. But once through, he had felt a bit ashamed that he had been so undignified. He wasn't afraid of Bowser. He was sorely tempted to turn around and send Bowser about his business, as he knew he very well could. But he thought better of it. Besides, Unc' Billy was already through that hole in the floor, and Jimmy didn't for a minute forget what had brought him there. He had come for eggs and so had Unc' Billy. It would never do to let Unc' Billy be alone up there for long. So Jimmy Skunk did what he very seldom does—hurried. Yes, sir, he hurried after Unc' Billy Possum. He meant to make sure of his share of the eggs he was certain were up there.

There was a row of nesting boxes along one side close to the floor. Above these was another row and above these a third row. Jimmy doesn't climb, but Unc' Billy is a famous climber.

"I'll take these lower nests," said Jimmy, and lifted his tail in a way that made Unc' Billy nervous.

"All right," replied Unc' Billy promptly. "All right, Brer Skunk. It's just as yo' say."

With this, Unc' Billy scrambled up to the next row of nests. Jimmy grinned and started to look in the lower nests. He took his time about it, for that is Jimmy's way. There was nothing in the first one and nothing in the second one and nothing in the third one. This was disappointing, to say the least, and Jimmy began to move a little faster. Meanwhile Unc' Billy had hurried from one nest to another in the second row with no better success. By the time Jimmy was half-way along his row Unc' Billy had begun on the upper row, and the only eggs he had found were hard china nest-eggs put there by Farmer Brown's boy to tempt the hens to lay in those particular nests. Disappointment was making Unc' Billy lose his temper. Each time he peeped in a nest and saw one of those china eggs, he hoped it was a real egg, and each time when he found it wasn't he grew angrier.

At last he so lost his temper that when he found another of those eggs he angrily pulled it out of the nest. Now it happened that Jimmy Skunk was just underneath. Down fell that hard china egg squarely on Jimmy Skunk's head. For just a minute Jimmy saw stars. At least, he thought he did. Then he saw the egg, and knew that Unc' Billy had knocked it down, and that it was this that had hit him. Jimmy was sore at heart because he had found no eggs, and now he had a bump on the head that also was sore. Jimmy Skunk lost his temper, a thing he rarely does.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 17, "Jimmy Gets a Bump")

STORY 1670. June 18, 1917

A Sad, Sad Quarrel

A quarrel's dreadful any way,
But when friends disagree

Illustrations. June 11 to June 16, 1917.

1664. Jimmy Skunk and Unc' Billy Possum Meet
"Good Mo'nin', Brer Skunk," he replied.

1665. Jimmy Skunk Explains
"I am not such a very big fellow, am I?" said Jimmy.

1666. A Little Something about Eggs
"Do you suppose Ah'd tell you if Ah had?" he demanded.

1667. Unc' Billy and Jimmy Skunk Meet Again
Unc' Billy stopped right where he was.

1668. A Matter of Politeness
Both tried to get through that hole at the same time.

1669. Jimmy Skunk Gets a Bump on the Head
Down fell that hard china egg squarely on Jimmy Skunk's head.

It is indeed a sorry sight
For any one to see.

Jimmy Skunk sat on the floor of Farmer Brown's henhouse, rubbing his head and glaring up at the upper row of nests with eyes red with anger. Of course it was dark in the henhouse, for it was night, but Jimmy can see in the dark, just as so many other little people who wear fur can. What he saw was the anxious looking face of Unc' Billy Possum staring down at him.

You remember what had happened. Unc' Billy had lost his temper and kicked a china nest egg out of a nest in that top row. He had lost his temper through disappointment when he had found that it wasn't a real egg. Jimmy Skunk had just happened to be beneath and that hard china egg had landed squarely on his head.

"You did that purposely!" snapped Jimmy. "You did that purposely, and you needn't tell me you didn't."

"On mah honor Ah didn't," protested Unc' Billy. "It was an accident, just a sho' 'nuff accident, and Ah'm right sorry fo' it."

"That sounds very nice, but I don't believe a word of it. You did it purposely, and you can't make me believe anything else. Come down here and fight. I dare you to!" Jimmy was getting more and more angry every minute.

Unc' Billy began to grow angry. Of course, it was wholly his fault that that egg had fallen, but it wasn't his fault that Jimmy had happened to be just beneath. He hadn't known that Jimmy was there. He had apologized, and he felt that no one could do more than that. Jimmy Skunk had doubted his word—had refused to believe him—and that made him angry. His little eyes glowed with rage.

"If yo' want to fight, come up here. I'll wait fo' yo' right where Ah am," he sputtered.

This made Jimmy angrier than ever. He couldn't climb up there, and he knew that Unc' Billy knew it. Unc' Billy was perfectly safe in promising to wait for him.

"You're a coward, just a plain no account coward!" snapped Jimmy. "I'm not going to climb up there, but I'll tell you what I am going to do; I'm going to wait right down here until you come down, if it isn't until next year. Nobody can drop things on my head and not get paid back. I thought you were a friend, but now I know better."

"Wait as long as yo' please. Ah reckons Ah can stay as long as yo' can," retorted Unc' Billy, grinding and snapping his teeth. All the time he took the greatest care not to show more than the tip of his nose and his eyes over the edge of the shelf in front of the nests.

"Suit yourself," retorted Jimmy. "I'm going to pay you up for that bump on my head or know the reason why."

And so they kept on quarreling and calling each other names, for the time being quite forgetting that they were where they had no business to be, either of them. It really was dreadful. And it was all because both had been sadly disappointed. They

had found no eggs where they had been sure they would find plenty. You see, Farmer Brown's boy had gathered every egg when he shut the biddies up for the night. Did you ever notice what a bad thing for the temper disappointment often is?

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 18)

STORY 1671. June 19, 1917

Jimmy Skunk is True to His Word

Unc' Billy Possum was having a bad night of it there in Farmer Brown's henhouse in nests on the top row. When he had grown tired of quarreling with Jimmy Skunk, he had tried to take a nap. He had tried first one nest and then another, but none just suited him. This was partly because he wasn't sleepy. He was hungry and not at all sleepy. He wished with all his heart that he hadn't foolishly yielded to that fit of temper which had resulted in kicking that china nest egg out of a nest and down on the head of Jimmy Skunk, making Jimmy so thoroughly angry.

Jimmy had declared that he would wait there below until Unc' Billy should come down and then he would pay him up for that bump on the head. Unc' Billy had no intention of going down while Jimmy was there. He thought that Jimmy would soon grow tired of waiting and go away. So for quite a while Unc' Billy didn't worry. But as it began to get towards morning he began to grow anxious. Unc' Billy had no desire to be found in that henhouse when Farmer Brown's boy came to feed the biddies.

Then, too, he was hungry. He had counted on a good meal of eggs, and not one had he found. Now he wanted to get out to look for something else to eat, but he couldn't without facing Jimmy Skunk, and it was better to go hungry than to do that. Yes, Sir, it was a great deal better to go hungry. Several times, when he thought Jimmy was asleep, he tried to steal down. He was just as careful not to make a sound as he could be, but every time Jimmy knew and was waiting for him. He wished that there was no such place as Farmer Brown's henhouse. He wished he had never thought of eggs. He wished many other foolish wishes, but most of all he wished that he hadn't lost his temper and kicked that egg down on Jimmy Skunk's head.

When the first light stole in under the door and the biddies began to stir uneasily on their roosts, Unc' Billy's anxiety would allow him to keep still no longer.

"Don' yo' think we better make up and get out of here, Brer Skunk," he ventured.

"I don't mind staying here; it's very comfortable," replied Jimmy, looking up at Unc' Billy in a way that made him most uncomfortable. It was plain to see that Jimmy hadn't forgiven him.

For some time Unc' Billy said no more, but he grew more and more restless. You see, he knew it would soon be time for Farmer Brown's boy to come to let the hens out and feed them. At last, he ventured to speak again.

"Ah reckons yo' done forget something," said he.

"What is that?" asked Jimmy.

"Ah reckons yo' done fo'get that it's most time fo' Farmer Brown's boy to come, and it won't do fo' we-uns to be found in here," replied Unc' Billy.

"I'm not worrying about Farmer Brown's boy. He can come as soon as he pleases," retorted Jimmy Skunk, and grinned.

That sounded like boasting, but it wasn't. No, sir, it wasn't, and Unc' Billy knew it. He knew that Jimmy meant it. Unc' Billy was in despair. He didn't dare stay, and he didn't dare go down and face Jimmy Skunk, and there he was. It certainly had been a bad night for Unc' Billy Possum.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 19)

STORY 1672. June 20, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Arrives

The light crept farther under the door of Farmer Brown's henhouse, and by this time the hens were all awake. Furthermore, they had discovered Jimmy Skunk down below and were making a great fuss. They were cackling so that Unc' Billy was sure ` would soon hear them and hurry out to find out what the noise was all about.

"If yo' would just get out of sight, Brer Skunk, Ah reckons those fool hens would keep quiet," Unc' Billy ventured.

"I don't mind their noise. It doesn't trouble me a bit," replied Jimmy Skunk, and grinned. It was plain enough to Unc' Billy that Jimmy was enjoying the situation.

But Unc' Billy wasn't. He was so anxious that he couldn't keep still. He paced back and forth along the shelf in front of the upper row of nests and tried to make up his mind whether it would be better to go down and face Jimmy Skunk or to try to hide under the hay in one of the nests, and all the time he kept listening and listening and listening for the footsteps of Farmer Brown's boy.

At last he heard them, and he knew by the sound that Farmer Brown's boy was coming in a hurry. He had heard the noise of the hens and was coming to find out what it was all about. Unc' Billy hoped that now Jimmy Skunk would retreat through the hole in the floor and give him a chance to escape.

"He's coming! Farmer Brown's boy is coming, Brer Skunk! Yo' better get away while yo' can!" whispered Unc' Billy.

"I hear him," replied Jimmy calmly. "I'm waiting for him to open the door for me to go out. It will be much easier than squeezing through that hole."

Unc' Billy gasped. He knew, of course, that it was Jimmy Skunk's boast that he feared no one, but it was hard to believe that Jimmy really intended to face Farmer Brown's boy right in his own henhouse where Jimmy had no business to be. He hoped that at last Jimmy's boldness would get him into trouble. Yes, he did. You see, that might give him a chance to slip away himself. Otherwise, he would be in a bad fix.

The latch on the door rattled. Unc' Billy crept into one of the nests, but frightened as he was, he couldn't keep from peeping over the edge to see what would happen. The door swung open, letting in a flood of light. The hens stopped their noise. Farmer Brown's boy stood in the doorway and looked in. Jimmy Skunk lifted his big plume of a tail just a bit higher than usual and calmly and without the least sign of being in a hurry walked straight towards the open door. Of course Farmer Brown's boy saw him at once.

"So it's you, you black and white rascal!" he exclaimed. "I suppose you expect me to step out of your way, and I suppose I will do just that very thing. You are the most impudent and independent fellow of my acquaintance. That's what you are. You didn't get any eggs, because I gathered all of them last night. And you didn't get a chicken because they were wise enough to stay on their roosts, so I don't know as I have any quarrel with you, and I'm sure I don't want any. Come along out of there, you rascal."

Farmer Brown's boy stepped aside, and Jimmy Skunk calmly and without the least sign of hurry or worry walked out, stopped for a drink at the pan of water in the henyard, walked through the henyard gate, and turned towards the stone wall along the edge of the Old Orchard.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 20)

STORY 1673. June 21, 1917

The Nest-Egg Gives Unc' Billy Away

'Tis little things that often seem
  Scarce worth a passing thought
Which in the end may prove that they
  With big results are fraught.

Farmer Brown's boy watched Jimmy Skunk calmly and peacefully go his way and grinned as he watched him. He scratched his head thoughtfully. "I suppose," said he, "that that is as perfect an example of the value of preparedness as there is. Jimmy knew he was all ready for trouble if I chose to make it, and that because of that I wouldn't make it. So he has calmly gone his way as if he were as much bigger than I as I am bigger than he. There certainly is nothing like being prepared if you want to avoid trouble."

Then Farmer Brown's boy once more turned to the henhouse and entered it. He looked to make sure that no hen had been foolish enough to go to sleep where Jimmy could have caught her, and satisfied of this, he would have gone about his usual morning work of feeding the hens but for one thing. That one thing was the china nest egg on the floor.

"Hello!" exclaimed Farmer Brown's boy when he saw it. "Now how did that come there? It must be that Jimmy Skunk pulled it out of one of those lower nests."

Now he knew just which nests had contained nest-eggs, and it didn't take but a

minute to find that none was missing in any of the lower nests.

"That's queer," he muttered. "That egg must have come from one of the upper nests. Jimmy couldn't have got up to those. None of the hens could have kicked it out last night, because they were all on the roosts when I shut them up. They certainly didn't do it this morning, because they wouldn't have dared leave the roosts with Jimmy Skunk here. I'll have to look into this."

So he began with the second row of nests and looked in each. Then he started on the upper row, and so he came to the nest in which Unc' Billy Possum was hiding under the hay and holding his breath. Now Unc' Billy had covered himself up pretty well with the hay, but he had forgotten one thing; he had forgotten his tail and it hung just over the edge of the nest. Of course, Farmer Brown's boy saw it. He couldn't help but see it.

"Ho, ho!" he exclaimed right away. "Ho, ho! So there was more than one visitor here last night. This henhouse seems to be a very popular place. I see that the first thing for me to do after breakfast is to nail a board over that hole in the floor. So it was you, Unc' Billy Possum, who kicked that nest-egg out. Found it a little hard for your teeth, didn't you? Lost your temper and kicked it out, didn't you? That was foolish, Unc' Billy, very foolish indeed. Never lose your temper over trifles. Never lose it anyway, but especially never lose it over such a trifle as a little disappointment. It doesn't pay. Now I wonder what I'd better do with you."

All this time Unc' Billy hadn't moved. Of course, he couldn't understand what Farmer Brown's boy was saying. Nor could he see what Farmer Brown's boy was doing, so he held his breath and hoped and hoped that he hadn't been discovered. And perhaps he wouldn't have been but for that telltale nest-egg on the floor. That was the cause of all his troubles. First it had angered Jimmy Skunk because as you remember, it had fallen on Jimmy's head. Then it had led Farmer Brown's boy to look in all the nests. It had seemed a trifle, kicking that egg out of that nest, but see what the results were. Truly, little things often are not so little as they seem.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 21)

STORY 1674. June 22, 1917

Unc' Billy Possum Tries His Old Trick

The first knowledge Unc' Billy Possum had that he was discovered came to him through his tail. Yes, sir, it came to him through his tail. Farmer Brown's boy pinched it. It was rather a mean thing to do, but Farmer Brown's boy was curious. He wanted to see what Unc' Billy would do. And he didn't pinch very hard, not hard enough to really hurt. Farmer Brown's boy is too good-hearted to hurt anyone if he can help it.

Now any other of the Green Forest and Green Meadows people would promptly have pulled their tail away had they been in Unc' Billy's place. But Unc' Billy didn't. No, sir, Unc' Billy didn't. That tail might have belonged to anyone but him so far as he made any sign. Of course, he felt like pulling it away. Anyone would have in his place. But he didn't move it the tiniest bit, which goes to show that Unc' Billy has great self-

control.

Farmer Brown's boy pinched again, just a little harder, but still Unc' Billy made no sign. Farmer Brown's boy chuckled and began to pull on that tail. He pulled and pulled until finally he had pulled Unc' Billy out of his hiding-place, and he swung by his tail from the hand of Farmer Brown's boy. There wasn't the least sign of life about Unc' Billy. He looked as if he were dead, and he acted as if he were dead. Any one not knowing Unc' Billy would have supposed that he was dead.

Farmer Brown's boy dropped Unc' Billy on the floor. He lay just as he fell. Farmer Brown's boy rolled him over with his foot, but there wasn't a sign of life in Unc' Billy. He hoped that Farmer Brown's boy really did think him dead. That was what he wanted. Farmer Brown's boy picked him up again and laid him on a box, first putting a board over the hole in the floor and closing the henhouse door. Then he went about his work of cleaning out the henhouse and measuring out the grain for the biddies.

Unc' Billy lay there on the box, and he certainly was pathetic looking. A dead animal or bird is always pathetic looking, and none was ever more so than Unc' Billy Possum as he lay on that box. His hair was all rumpled up, as it usually is. It was filled with dust from the floor and bits of straw. His lips were drawn back and his mouth partly open. His eyes seemed to be closed. As a matter of fact, they were open just a teeny, weeny bit, just enough for Unc' Billy to watch Farmer Brown's boy. But to have looked at him you would have thought him as dead as the deadest thing that ever was.

As he went about his work Farmer Brown's boy kept an eye on Unc' Billy and chuckled. "You old fraud," said he. "You think you are fooling me, but I know you. Possums don't die of nothing in hens' nests[28]. You certainly are a clever old rascal, and the best actor I've ever seen. I wonder how long you will keep it up. I wish I had half as much self-control."

When he had finished his work he picked Unc' Billy up by the tail once more, opened the door, and started for the house with Unc' Billy swinging from his hand and bumping against his legs. Still Unc' Billy gave no sign of life. He wondered where he was being taken to. He was terribly frightened. But he stuck to his old trick of playing dead which had served him so well more than once before.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 22)

STORY 1675. June 23, 1917

Unc' Billy Gives Himself Away

Never had Unc' Billy Possum played that old trick of his better than he was playing it now. Farmer Brown's boy knew that Unc' Billy was only pretending to be dead, yet so well did Unc' Billy pretend that it was hard work for Farmer Brown's boy to believe what he was sure was so—that Unc' Billy was very much alive and only waiting for a chance to slip away.

28 See STORY 89, 1912 and STORY 378, 1913 for previous encounters between Unc' Billy and Farmer Brown's boy.

They were half-way from the henyard to the house when Bowser the Hound came to meet his master.

"Now we shall see what we shall see," said Farmer Brown's boy, as Bowser came trotting up. "If Unc' Billy can stand this test, I'll take off my hat to him every time we meet hereafter."

He held Unc' Billy out to Bowser, and Bowser sniffed him all over.

Just imagine that! Just think of being nosed and sniffed at by one of whom you were terribly afraid and not so much as twitching an ear. Farmer Brown's boy dropped Unc' Billy on the ground, and Bowser rolled him over and sniffed at him and then looked up at his master, as much as to say: "This fellow doesn't interest me. He's dead. He must be the fellow I saw go under the henhouse last night. How did you kill him"

Farmer Brown's boy laughed and picked Unc' Billy up by the tail again. "He's fooled you all right, old fellow, and you don't know it," said he to Bowser, as the latter pranced on ahead to the house. The mother of Farmer Brown's boy was in the doorway, watching them approach.

"What have you got there?" she demanded. "I declare if it isn't a Possum! Where did you kill him? Was he the cause of all that racket among the chickens?"

Farmer Brown's boy took Unc' Billy into the kitchen and dropped him on a chair. Mrs. Brown came over to look at him closer.

"Poor little fellow," said she. "Poor little fellow. It was too bad he got into mischief and had to be killed. I don't suppose he knew any better. Somehow it always seems wrong to me to kill these little creatures just because they get into mischief when all the time, they don't know that they are in mischief." She stroked Unc' Billy gently.

The eyes of Farmer Brown's boy twinkled. He went over to a corner and pulled a straw from his mother's broom. Then he returned to Unc' Billy and began to tickle Unc' Billy's nose. Mrs. Brown looked puzzled. She was puzzled.

"What are you doing that for?" she asked.

"Just for fun," replied Farmer Brown's boy and kept on tickling Unc' Billy's nose. Now Unc' Billy could stand having his tail pinched, and being carried head down, and being dropped on the ground, but this was too much for him; he wanted to sneeze. He had got to sneeze. He did sneeze. He couldn't help it, though it were to cost him his life.

"Land of love!" exclaimed Mrs. Brown, jumping back and clutching her skirts in both hands as if she expected Unc' Billy would try to take refuge behind them. "Do you mean to say that that Possum is alive?"

"Seems that way," replied Farmer Brown's boy as Unc' Billy sneezed again, for that straw was still tickling his nose. "I should certainly say it seems that way. The old sinner is no more dead than I am. He's just pretending. He fooled you all right, Mother, but he didn't fool me. I haven't hurt a hair of him. You ought to know me well enough by this time to know that I wouldn't hurt him."

He looked at his mother reproachfully, and she hastened to apologize.

"But what could I think?" she demanded. "If he isn't a dead-looking creature, I never have seen one. What are you going to do with him, son?"

"Take him over to the Green Forest after breakfast and let him go," replied Farmer Brown's boy.

This is just what he did do.

(*The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk*, Chapter 23)

STORY 1676. June 25, 1917

Billy Mink Has a Secret

A secret is the nicest thing
  Providing it be good;
And sometimes it's the hardest work
  To keep it as you should.

In fact, the nicer the secret the harder it is to keep sometimes. This is because you think so much about it that you want to talk about it, or if you don't want to talk about it you forget and do talk about it. Or, if you do manage to keep still about it, you are apt to be very mysterious and folks guess right away that you have a secret and then try to find it out.

Billy Mink is one who knows how to keep a secret. You see, Billy is very clever and cunning and has the very sharpest of wits. So when he has a secret he usually is able to keep it. If any of his neighbors should discover it, you may be pretty sure that it will prove to be quite accidental. That Billy had a little brown wife was, of course, no secret. Mrs. Billy had been seen with him too often for that. That somewhere they had a home was no secret. Everybody has a home. At least everybody does in the Spring of the year. So no one doubted that Billy and Mrs. Billy had a home. But just where that home was no one knew. That was a secret.

A great many would have liked to discover that secret if for nothing more than the sake of feeling that they were just as smart as Billy Mink and perhaps a little smarter. But though Billy was watched and Mrs. Billy was watched no one got the slightest idea where that home was. Peter Rabbit would be ashamed to tell you how much time he wasted watching Billy Mink just out of curiosity to know where that home was. But it was quite useless. Peter never returned to the dear Old Brier Patch one bit the wiser. Whether that home was up the Laughing Brook, or down the Laughing Brook, Peter didn't have the least idea. Sometimes he was sure it was up and sometimes he was sure it was down, and sometimes he wondered if it was near the Laughing Brook at all.

Now, all the time Billy Mink knew why Peter was watching him and he used to take delight in teasing Peter by allowing Peter to follow him a little way and then mysteriously disappearing.

Illustrations. June 18 to June 23, 1917.

1670. A Sad, Sad Quarrel
"You did that purposely!" snapped Jimmy.

1671. Jimmy Skunk is True to His Word
Unc' Billy was in despair—he didn't dare stay and he didn't dare go down and face Jimmy Skunk.

1672. Farmer Brown's Boy Arrives
"So it's you, you black and white rascal!" he exclaimed.

1673. The Nest-Egg Gives Unc' Billy Away
"Now, how did that come there?"

1674. Unc' Billy Possum Tries His Old Trick
He swung by his tail from the hand of Farmer Brown's Boy.

1675. Unc' Billy Gives Himself Away
He held Unc' Billy out to Bowser and Bowser sniffed him all over.

“What are you hiding behind that fern leaf for, Peter?” Billy asked one day as he came skipping down the Laughing Brook.

“Nothing in particular,” replied Peter, who was rather confused by the question, for all the time he had supposed himself so well hidden that Billy wouldn’t see him.

Billy grinned. “Come see my house,” said he. “I’ve got the finest little home you ever laid your two eyes on. I’m very proud of that home. You really ought to see it. Don’t you want to come along with me and see it”

“I’d love to!” exclaimed Peter, hopping out from behind the fern leaf. “Is it very far from here, Billy?”

“Not far enough to tire such a long-legged fellow as you,” replied Billy. “I’m on my way there now. Just follow me. If you keep your eyes on me, you will have no trouble. Come on.”

Now, what Billy said was very true, but there was a little joker in it all the same. Peter found it out shortly. He started after Billy with his eyes fixed on Billy’s little brown form and then all in a flash, he found himself staring at nothing but some brown leaves where just a second before he had seen Billy just as plainly as ever he could be seen. It was just as if Billy Mink had turned himself into those brown leaves. Peter looked this way and looked that way and looked the other way, but no Billy Mink was to be seen. Nor did he get another glimpse of him again that day.

You see, Billy Mink can move so quickly when he wants to get out of sight that it seems as if he simply vanished into nothing. And his is one reason he is able to keep his secrets.

STORY 1677. June 26, 1917

Billy Mink Has Fun with Peter Rabbit

Of course, it wasn’t really nice of Billy Mink to invite Peter Rabbit to go with him to see his new house and then disappear, leaving Peter with no more idea than before where that new house was. But then, it wasn’t nice of Peter to hide for the purpose of watching Billy Mink, of spying on him, so as to find out what it was plain Billy meant to keep a secret. So I rather think it served Peter right to be left looking this way and that way and the other way and feeling very foolish as he wondered and wondered what could have become of Billy Mink.

You know how it is with Billy Mink. There isn’t anyone on four feet—or two either, for that matter—harder to keep track of than Billy when he doesn’t care to be followed. He is so quick in his movements that he disappears right while you are looking at him, and while you are wondering what has become of him, he reappears seemingly from nowhere. Now, when he had invited Peter to come with him to see his new home, he had told Peter that all he need do was to keep his eyes on him (Billy) and follow. All the time he had planned to do just what he did do—disappear. It was just a little joke on his part to pay Peter for his curiosity about a thing that didn’t concern him

in the least.

Billy thought that, of course, Peter would know that it was a joke, but Peter didn't. The next day when they met Peter apologized.

"I'm sorry, Billy Mink," said he, "that I didn't keep my eyes on you yesterday. I meant to, but I must have looked somewhere else just a second without really knowing it and when I looked back you had disappeared.

I'm ever so sorry, because it was very nice of you to invite me to see your new home, and I am very much interested in it. There is nothing I would like better than to see it."

Billy Mink's eyes twinkled. He knew at once that Peter didn't have the least idea that he had been tricked.

"That is all right, Peter," said he. "One day is as good as another. Suppose you make me a visit today. Wait until I catch a fat trout to take home to Mrs. Billy and we will start."

So Peter sat on the bank of the Laughing Brook and watched Billy Mink dive into a little pond. Presently Billy's little brown head popped up and in his mouth was a fat trout. He climbed out on the bank, shook himself, nodded to Peter and started along the bank down the Laughing Brook. At once Peter started after him.

"This time I'll be sure to keep my eyes on him," said Peter to himself. "I won't be so stupid again."

So Peter hopped along with his eyes fastened on Billy Mink until they came to a place where there were a lot of stones such as you often find along the Laughing Brook. It was among those stones that Billy Mink suddenly vanished just as he had vanished among the brown leaves the day before. Peter was vexed, not with Billy, but with himself, for he still thought that it was his own fault that he had lost sight of Billy. He looked this way and that way and every other way, but Billy's little brown form was nowhere to be seen.

"He must have gone on down the Laughing Brook," thought Peter, and hurried on, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

All the time Billy Mink was behind Peter and going in just the opposite direction, UP the Laughing Brook. And Billy was chuckling so that it was all he could do to keep from dropping that fat trout. He was having great fun with Peter Rabbit. Yes, sir, he certainly was having great fun. And the best of it was he knew that Peter didn't know it.

STORY 1678. June 27, 1917

Peter Catches on at Last

To laugh at jokes on others played
  Is quite a natural thing to do;
But good for you if you can laugh

At jokes which others play on you.

A third time Billy Mink played that joke of inviting Peter Rabbit to follow him to see his new home and suddenly disappearing. Even then unsuspecting Peter didn't catch on but thought it was due to his own stupidity or carelessness that he failed to keep his eyes on the brown rascal. This time they were near the Smiling Pool when Billy Mink disappeared. Peter kept on until he reached the Smiling Pool.

"Chug-a-rum!" said Grandfather Frog from his big lily pad. "Are you looking for someone, Peter?"

"Yes," replied Peter. "Yes, I am Grandfather Frog. I'm looking for Billy Mink. Have you seen him pass this way?"

"No," replied Grandfather Frog. "I haven't seen him lately, and what is more, I don't want to see him. Billy Mink is a scamp and the less you have to do with him the better, Peter Rabbit. The less you have to do with him the better. I'm surprised that you should be looking for him."

Peter grinned, for he knew that Grandfather Frog has no love for Billy Mink. Suddenly it popped into his head that Grandfather Frog who, you know, is very old and accounted very wise, might know Billy Mink's secret.

"By the way," said he, "do you know where Billy's new home is? He invited me to go with him to see it, but I fear I was stupid, for somehow I lost sight of him."

Grandfather Frog stared at Peter and his great goggly eyes looked more goggly than ever.

Say that again, Peter," said he, and his voice sounded as if he was trying to choke something back—a laugh, perhaps. "Say that again. I don't think I heard you quite right."

So Peter repeated what he had said. Indeed, he told him the whole story of how three different times Billy Mink had invited him to go with him to see that new home and how each time he, Peter, had somehow failed to keep his eyes on Billy and so had lost him. "I don't know what he can think of me. I really don't. And I would so like to see that house of Billy's, because I never have seen him home, long as I have known him," concluded Peter wistfully.

Grandfather Frog did his best, but to save him he couldn't choke back his laughter this time. He opened his great mouth and laughed until he nearly fell off his big green lily pad. When he had laughed until he could laugh no more, he found his voice once more.

"My, my, my, you are innocent!" he exclaimed. "Chug-a-rum! You are innocent, Peter Rabbit! I really don't see how such an innocent and unsuspecting chap as you have managed to live so long in this world of clever scamps. I really don't. You don't know what Billy Mink can think of you, eh? Well, I'll tell you. He thinks just what I think—that you are too innocent and unsuspecting to run about alone. That's what he, thinks. He is probably at home this, very minute laughing himself sick at the joke he

played on you.

"I'm surprised at you, Peter. I really am. You ought to know Billy Mink well enough by this time to know that he never gives any of his secrets away and that it takes sharper eyes and quicker wits than yours to follow him when he wants to disappear. You lost sight of him because he meant you should, that's all. Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho, ho! The idea of Billy Mink taking anybody to his home! Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho, ho!"

For a minute Peter looked quite provoked. Then gradually he began to understand that Grandfather Frog was right and that Billy Mink had been having fun at his expense. The joke was on him and very wisely Peter saw it. He looked as foolish as he felt, but instead of getting angry he began to laugh, too.

"Serves me right," said he at last. "Billy Mink's home is no business of mine. Now I guess I'll go attend to my own affairs." And he did.

STORY 1679. June 28, 1917

Billy Mink Does Much Fishing

Fishing, fishing all the day;
Sometimes work and sometimes play.

Usually when you or I go fishing it really is a kind of play. We go for fun. But the great world would fare badly if it depended for its supply of fish to eat wholly on those who go fishing for pleasure. So ever so many people make their living by catching fish and when they go fishing it is work and not play. Ordinarily Billy Mink doesn't call fishing work. He enjoys fishing. It is the same with Little Joe Otter. When fish are very plentiful these two brown-coated fishermen will sometimes catch more than they can eat. They do it just for fun. But when fish are scarce it is different. Then fishing becomes work.

Grandfather Frog, sitting on his big green lily-pad in the Smiling Pool, sees much that is going on about him. He sees much and says little. It was shortly after Peter Rabbit had paid him that visit when he had had such a laugh because of the way Peter had been fooled by Billy Mink that Grandfather Frog noticed that Billy Mink seemed to be doing a great deal of fishing in the Smiling Pool.

He would catch a fish and then instead of eating it he would disappear with it. In a short time, he would be back again and then the same thing would happen. Just as soon as he caught a fish, he would disappear with it. He wasted no time in play. It was plain to see that he was fishing for more than just the fun of fishing. Grandfather Frog watched him thoughtfully. By and by he ventured a remark.

"Chug-a-rum! Seems to me, Billy Mink, that you have a big appetite. What do you do with so many trout?" said he. "That's my business," replied Billy Mink, "and none of yours."

"Just so. Just so," replied Grandfather Frog good-naturedly. "You must have

considerable of a family, Billy Mink. Nothing like a lot of little mouths to feed to keep one busy, is there?" He grinned at Billy Mink and winked knowingly. "You can't fool Grandfather Frog," he rambled on. "I'm too old and too wise to be fooled as you fooled Peter Rabbit."

Once more he grinned and winked at Billy, and this time Billy grinned himself. He had to grin at the memory of the joke on Peter.

"No, sir, you can't fool me," continued Grandfather Frog. "No one ever catches as many fish as you've caught this morning and still keeps on fishing unless it happens that there are more mouths than one to feed. How many are there, Billy? How many little mouths have the trout of the Smiling Pool and the Laughing Brook got to feed?

Billy Mink acted just as if he was stone deaf. Yes, he did. He acted just as if he hadn't heard a word. He went right on with his fishing and pretty soon he caught a big, fat trout. He swam over to the bank with it and there he sat down as if he meant to eat it. It was the finest trout he had caught that whole morning and to tell the truth Billy was hungry.

The very sight of that trout made his mouth water. He opened his mouth to take a bite and then, instead, he grabbed up that fat trout and disappeared. Yes, sir, that is just what he did. He disappeared with that trout just as he had disappeared with all the others that morning.

Grandfather Frog chuckled long and deep.

"Billy may be a scamp," said he, "but he's a good father. He wanted that trout, but he has taken it home to his youngsters. And he didn't once admit that he had any. That's like Billy Mink. Yes, sir, that's like him. But he can't fool Grandfather Frog."

STORY 1680. June 29, 1917

A Hollow Log Nursery

If you were just a little Mink
  It's probable that you would think
A hollow log a home as grand
  As any home within the land.

Anyway, it would suit you better than any other home. That is, of course, if you were a Mink. That is exactly the kind of a home that Billy Mink had provided for his family. I suppose that to be strictly truthful I should have said that Mrs. Billy had provided it. It really was her choice, though I fancy that she had allowed Billy to think that it was his.

It was very cunningly hidden, was that home of Billy Mink's. It was so cunningly hidden that it was really no trouble at all to keep it a secret, and a secret it was, as you and I and Peter Rabbit know. In fact, not one of Billy's neighbors had the least idea where it was. They didn't know whether it was up the Laughing Brook or down the Laughing Brook, and they never could tell from watching Billy or Mrs. Billy. As

a matter of fact, it was up the Laughing Brook, almost up to the home of Paddy the Beaver.

Just below where the Laughing Brook made a little splashing waterfall was a quiet pool in which trout love to live, and just a few steps back from this little pool was the thick, brushy top of a fallen tree in which a great amount of rubbish had collected—sticks and leaves brought down by the Laughing Brook when it was out of its banks in the early Spring. Underneath all this was a hollow log, a perfectly splendid hollow log, open at the end toward the Laughing Brook, warm and dry, and with plenty of room inside. Mrs. Billy's sharp eyes had snapped joyously the very first time she had seen it. She had been up and down the whole length of the Laughing Brook and even over along the bank of the Big River into which the Laughing Brook flows and she knew that nowhere else was there anything to compare with this hollow log for a home.

"Billy," said she, "come see this old hollow log."

Billy came at once and as soon as he saw it, he declared that it was the very place for their home. The more he examined it inside and out the more enthusiastic he grew, until in the end you would have supposed that he had discovered it himself. Mrs. Billy said nothing, but quietly went ahead and made a cozy, comfortable bed in the farther end of the hollow log, and so the matter was settled. There she spent most of her time when she wasn't out fishing or hunting for frogs or trying to catch a bird by way of a change of fare.

Then one never-to-be-forgotten morning when Billy poked his head in to see why she didn't come out to go fishing with him he found a splendid surprise awaiting him. Mrs. Billy was not alone. No, sir, she was not alone. There were five tiny babies there, five little, helpless mites, whose eyes were not yet open and wouldn't be for some time. The old hollow log had become a nursery! Mrs. Billy allowed him no more than a glimpse of them and then sent him about his business. He went. There was something about Mrs. Billy that warned him that it was best for him to do as he was told. But he didn't go far. He was so puffed up with pride that he couldn't bear to even think of going far out of sight of that old tree top under which was the hollow log. It had become the most wonderful and important place in the whole Great World.

STORY 1681. June 30, 1917

Hollow Log Play Days

The fairest sight of any day
Is happy little folks at play.

Just as long as Billy Mink's five babies were too small to leave the hollow log, which was their nursery, Billy and Mrs. Billy kept it a secret. Most of their neighbors suspected that they had a family, but where it was hidden not one had been able to find out. Billy and Mrs. Billy were too smart to let that secret out. But babies grow very fast, especially the babies of the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows. And, of course, when they get big enough, they must play. Play is just as

necessary for them as for little human children.

So it wasn't very long before the old hollow log was a very lively place, for if there is any one livelier than a young Mink, I don't know who it is, and there were five young Minks here. At first they didn't venture out from under the pile of brush and rubbish that covered the old log, but were content to chase each other in and out of the hollow log and this way and that way under the sheltering brush while their mother kept a watchful eye on them, and Billy Mink himself wasn't far distant, unless he happened to be on a fishing trip.

But always in their ears was the sound of the Laughing Brook and always it seemed calling, calling to those five little Minks. Their mother kept them under the brush as long as she could, but she was wise enough to know that sooner or later they would go out themselves if she didn't lead them out, and so just as soon as she thought they were big enough she told them to follow her and led the way out to the bank of the little pool close by the pile of brush under which they had spent their short lives thus far.

Such a wonderful place as it was! No wonder their little eyes grew round with astonishment. They saw for the first time the Laughing Brook itself, the jolly Little Sunbeams, a wee bit of the blue, blue sky, trees, and growing bushes and pretty wildflowers, and they felt the gentle touch of the Merry Little Breezes. For a time, they were content to keep very close to mother and just look and look and look.

Presently she led the way to a smooth, soft, messy place on the bank and told them to play while she pretended to take a nap. She only pretended, for not for the world would she have really closed her eyes with those five precious youngsters out where other eyes might see them. Then such a good time as those five little brown imps did have. They played tag. They wrestled and tumbled over each other and over their mother. It was great fun.

After that they came out to play every day, but only when their mother was with them. When she was away after food for them, they kept under the brush and played about their hollow log home, though I suspect that it was sometimes hard work to resist the temptation to steal out to that lovely mossy bank for a romp in the sunshine.

But it wouldn't have done. It really wouldn't have done at all. You see, Billy Mink's secret was known now. Sammy Jay spied those youngsters and their mother having such a good time and Sammy had watched until they had returned to their home under the brush pile. Then he had hurried away to spread the news. So it was well that those five little Minks were obedient, for otherwise there might have been a sad ending to those happy play days—a sad time instead of a glad time.

STORY 1682. July 2, 1917

Learning by Doing

The surest way to learn a thing
Is just to try to do it,

Illustrations. June 25 to June 30, 1917.

1676. Billy Mink Has a Secret
"What are you hiding behind that fern leaf for, Peter?"

1677. Billy Mink Has Fun with Peter Rabbit
Billy's brown head popped up and in his mouth was a fat trout.

1678. Peter Catches on at Last
"Are you looking for someone, Peter?"

1679. Billy Mink Does Much Fishing
"Chug-a-rum! Seems to me, Billy Mink, that you have a big appetite."

1680. A Hollow Log Nursery
"Billy," said she. "Come and see the hollow log."

1681. Hollow Log Play Days
Sammy Jay had spied these youngsters and their mother.

And then to try and try and try
As if you really knew it.

And the first thing you know you will find that you will know it. There is nothing like learning by doing. You may watch others do a thing and think that you have learned just how to do it yourself, but when you come to try it, you find it is a very different matter.

Now, Mrs. Billy Mink knows this. So does Billy. No one knows it better than they do. So when their five babies were just a little too big to be called babies any longer, or at least too big to feel that they were babies, Mrs. Billy began to teach them the ways of the Great World. At least she began to teach them the ways of that part of the Great World which would be likely to concern a healthy Mink.

Of course, the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows are not taught out of books or in the way that little boys and girls are taught. They are taught altogether in the great School of Experience, which is the school of learning by doing. And they begin very young. Usually, Mother is along to help them out of trouble when they make mistakes and to keep them from harm. Also she shows them how to do things. She does it by doing a thing, and they, being natural little imitators, try to do the same thing, and so they learn.

That was the way it was with Mrs. Billy Mink and the five little Minks Just as soon as they were big enough, she took them for a walk in the Green Forest. First she led them to an old stump which was very much rotted and in this she began to dig, for it was so decayed that it was what is called punk, and her sharp claws made it fly. Seeing her dig, the five little Minks began to dig, too, and thought it great fun. Presently a beetle ran out, and their mother pounced on it and ate it. The five little Minks watched her and their mouths watered. Then she began to dig again and so did they. Almost right away another beetle ran out right under the nose of one of the little Minks. He knew what to do. Of course, he pounced on it and ate it and smacked his lips, while the mouths of the other little Minks watered.

"Was it good?" asked one.

"M-m-m-m," was all the lucky one said and began to hunt for another.

But there were no more in this particular old stump and Mother Mink led them to an old log under which were some more beetles, enough for every little Mink to have one. So they learned that beetles were good to eat, and where to look for them and how to get them.

A little farther on Mrs. Billy suddenly stopped and stood perfectly still. The five little Minks did just as she did, though why she did it they hadn't the least idea. But presently they heard footsteps. Mother's ears being trained had heard them first. They saw her sniffing the air and so they sniffed, too, and presently they smelled something strange.

"Hide!" said their mother sharply but softly and darted under a heap of brush. The five little Minks did the same thing just because she did. The footsteps came nearer and

nearer and peeping out they saw someone so big they couldn't believe their own eyes. They hadn't dreamed that anyone could be so big. It was Buster Bear. They could smell him very strongly now and they didn't like the smell, because they knew that he was someone to fear or mother would not have hidden. So they learned to use their ears and their noses, and the next time they met Buster Bear they would know that the thing to do, was to hide. They had learned it by doing it. And many more things they learned in just that same way before they returned to the hollow log under the pile of brush beside the Laughing Brook.

STORY 1683. July 3, 1917

Fun and Fish

O, little fishes in the brook
Who dart about in careless play.
Go hide among the weeds and stones,
For there is danger on the way!

Billy Mink loves fish, especially trout. Perhaps I should say he likes fish, for things we love we never harm. Mrs. Billy likes fish. There is nothing either of them likes better. So it would have been very queer, indeed, if the five little Minks hadn't liked fish. They did. They liked them so well that they kept Billy and Mrs. Billy fishing a good part of the time. The bigger they grew the more fish they wanted and needed.

Now, Mrs. Billy is one who believes firmly that children should be taught early in life that they must look out for themselves and do their share as soon as possible. So just as soon as she thought the five little Minks were big enough, she took them for a swimming lesson. It was necessary that they should know how to swim in order that they might be able to catch fish. Of course.

So very early one morning she led them to a very shallow little pool in the Laughing Brook for their first swimming lesson. First, they went in wading. It was great fun. They romped and played. They splashed water over each other. They liked the water. Their mother showed them that under or among the stones in the water were bugs good to eat, and they had a great time hunting for them. When they had grown quite used to the water, Mrs. Billy swam out where it was deep enough for swimming and began to dive and swim beneath the surface and have such a good time as only a good swimmer can have.

The five little Minks watched her and wished and wished that they could do as she did. At last one of them got courage enough to go out where his feet could not touch bottom. It frightened him a little and he paddled with all his might, and, of course, he began to swim. Then he was no longer afraid. Of course he didn't go far, because he tired easily, but just as soon as he was rested, he tried it again. Seeing how proud he was and what a good time he was having, his brothers and sisters tried it, and the first thing they knew all of them had learned to swim.

After that they went swimming every day, and every day they could swim a little

faster and a little farther than the day before. They enjoyed it so much that they spent a great deal of their time in the water.

One morning Mrs. Billy led them out as usual, but instead of taking them to their usual swimming pool she led them down to the Laughing Brook to a pool they never had visited before.

"Now, children," said she, "I am going to show you how to catch a fish." It was a deep, dark looking pool, with an overhanging bank, just such a pool as trout dearly love. Mrs. Billy slipped into the water and dived with hardly a ripple to show where she had gone. The five little Minks sat on the bank and watched. It was very exciting. It seemed to them that their mother was gone so long that something must have happened to her.

Suddenly her brown head popped above the water right in the middle of the pool and in her mouth was a fat, gleaming, speckled trout still flapping. She swam ashore, climbed out on the bank, and bit the trout in the neck so as to kill it. Then such a feast as those five hungry little Minks did have! You see, the trout was big enough for each to have a share. While they were eating it and pretending to quarrel over it, Mrs. Billy dived again and presently she had another trout, which she ate herself.

Then she led the way to another little pool—a shallow little pool. In it a school of minnows were at play.

NO STORY. July 4, 1917

STORY 1684. July 5, 1917

The First Lesson in Fishing

Very, very carefully Mrs. Billy Mink stole up to a shallow little pool in the Laughing Brook. In that shallow little pool, a school of minnows were at play. Very, very carefully behind Mrs. Billy five little Minks stole up to that shallow little pool. They were careful because Mrs. Mink was careful. You see, they naturally imitated her. That is the way the children of most of the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest learn. Mrs. Billy moved to the edge of the little pool and her shadow fell across the water. Instantly those

"Lie down and keep still," commanded Mrs. Billy. The five little Minks did as they were told, for they were well brought up. Presently one little minnow appeared and then another and another until all of them were playing just as before.

"Now let me see you catch some," said Mrs. Billy, and there was a twinkle in her eyes.

At once up jumped the five little Minks and rushed for the little pool, each eager to be the first to catch a minnow. Each was disappointed.

There was no first. There was no first because no single minnow was caught. Every last one of them was in hiding, frightened half out of his wits. The five little Minks

looked at their mother with the most foolish looks on their five little faces. Mrs. Billy smiled and got up.

"It's of no use to waste any more time here," said she. Then, seeing how disappointed the five little Minks looked, she added: "We'll try another little pool and see if we cannot have better luck there."

So she led the way down the Laughing Brook to another little pool where another little school of minnows were at play. This time, while the five little Minks watched, their mother stole around to the other side of the pool from the one where the minnows were at play and took the greatest care that her shadow should not fall on the water. She entered the little pool without making so much as a tiny splash and swam straight across toward where the little minnows were at play. Then she dashed right in among them.

Of course, the minnows were terribly frightened, and, of course, they tried to dash away from her, and this took them into such shallow water that some of them in their fright flapped right out on the shore. Mrs. Billy didn't give them time to think. She was here, there, and everywhere, and in no time at all she had half a dozen of those foolish minnows. The five little Minks had watched open-mouthed with excitement. Their mother gave each a minnow. "Now," said she, "you have got to catch minnows for yourselves. I've showed you how to do it, and we'll see how well you've learned the lesson."

She led the way to still another little pool and there were some more little minnows at play. The five little Minks stole around the pool just as they had seen their mother do and swam across as nearly like the way she had done as they could, though in their eagerness each to be first they splashed a little and some of the minnows were, quick enough to take the alarm and hide. But some were not, and these did just as those Mrs. Billy had surprised had done. They lost their heads, as the saying is, and losing their heads they lost their lives, because those five little Minks were right among them before they knew what was happening.

Each little Mink managed to catch a minnow, and five prouder little Minks never lived than those five as they climbed up the bank to where their mother lay, each with a fish he or she had caught. And they agreed that never, never, had they tasted any fish to compare with those minnows.

STORY 1685. July 6, 1917

Something About Shadows

Shadows there are in the day,
  When Mr. Sun shines brightly;
But those that people often fear
  Are shadows that come nightly.

Did you ever stop to think that there are shadows when jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun is shining his very brightest and that these shadows almost always are friendly? It is

always cooler and more comfortable in these shadows, and without them the world just simply couldn't get along. What we call shade on a hot sunny day is nothing more than a lot of shadows together.

But at night there are other shadows, the Black Shadows. They come creeping out from the Purple Hills as soon as Mr. Sun goes to bed, and they stay until he gets up the next morning. Those shadows also are very welcome after a hot day, for they mean coolness and comfort. But also the Black Shadows of the night sometimes are fearsome things because of the things that are done in them. That is why most of the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest hide as soon as jolly Mr. Sun goes to bed. And that is why certain other little people who can see among the Black Shadows do all their hunting then. You see, it is easier for them to surprise and catch those whom they hunt because the latter cannot see.

Billy Mink and Mrs. Billy have very convenient eyes. They can see perfectly by day, and they also see at night. So they sleep whenever they feel like it and go hunting whenever they feel like it, and it makes no real difference to them whether Mr. Sun is up or in bed behind the Purple Hills. Of course, their five children were just like them in this respect, and they were out at night as often as in the daytime.

Now, Billy and Mrs. Mink are feared by everybody smaller than themselves and by many considerably bigger. But they in turn are not altogether without fear.

No one knows better than they that Hooty the Owl wouldn't hesitate a second to catch one of them if he had the chance when he was especially hungry. There are others on whom he would much rather dine, but Hooty isn't over-particular when he is hungry. As for young Minks, well, Hooty wouldn't have to be so terribly hungry to be tempted by one should he chance to catch one.

So Mrs. Billy warned the five little Minks that the greatest danger they must watch out for would be in the air. And she warned them to watch out for shadows at night.

"You see," she explained, "that big robber of a Hooty files without a sound. The wings of the Hawk family rustle, and if you are reasonably quick, as every Mink should be, you can dodge out of danger at the sound of the wings of any Hawk foolish enough to try to catch you. But Hooty's wings are as silent as the Black Shadows themselves. My ears are very sharp, as you know, but I have had Hooty pass just above a place where I was hiding and haven't heard a sound.

You needn't be afraid of him in the daytime, but at night you must keep your eyes wide open every second if you want to live to grow up. The instant you see a shadow that moves in the night, hide. Don't stop to make sure what that shadow is. Hide first and make sure afterward.

The five little Minks said, "Yes, marm." But in their foolish little hearts they were sure that they were too smart to be caught by Hooty or anybody else, and that Mother was just a little overanxious, as mothers are apt to be.

STORY 1686. July 7, 1917

The Boldest Little Mink

O, he was bold as bold could be;
A foolish little Mink was he.

You will find that little folks who are very bold usually are also very foolish. Their boldness makes them foolish. The two things seem to go together. Boldness makes them think that they know more than anyone else, or at least quite as much as anyone else, and so they do not heed the advice of those older and wiser than they. I hardly know which is worse—to be foolishly timid or foolishly bold, but I suspect that those among the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows who are foolishly timid live longer than those who are foolishly bold.

Now, whenever you find a family of children you will always find one who is bolder than the others. It was so with the five little Minks, the children of Billy Mink and Mrs. Billy. There was one who was always the first to try any new adventure. He was the first to learn to swim and the first to catch a fish. Also, I am sorry to say, he was the first to disobey his mother and go out from the safety of the bush heap under which their home was while she was away. And because he was bold, he was a boaster, which is usually the way with those who are bold.

The little Mink had answered "Yes, marm," with the others when their mother had warned them about Hooty the Owl, and that it was safer to hide first at the least suspicion of danger and look into the matter afterward, but down in his heart he had thought his mother foolishly timid, and as soon as the five little Minks were alone he boasted that he wouldn't run, from any- thing until he knew what he was running from.

"I guess," said he, "that I have sense enough to know when danger is near. If we run from every moving shadow, we will be running most of the time. This Hooty the Owl mother tells about may be a terrible fellow, and then again he may not be half so terrible as she tries to make out. I think she is trying to scare us. Yes, sir, that's what I think. I would like to see him try to catch me."

The bold little Mink's brothers and sisters eyed him doubtfully. "You're just bragging," said one. "I think that such talk is silly," said another.

"You know very well that Mother knows best," said a third.

"If you don't watch out you may get your wish and also Hooty the Owl may get you," said the fourth. "And it would serve you just right if he should," he added.

Now, the boldest little Mink was also a vain little Mink. He liked to have his brothers and sisters look up to him and admire him because of his boldness. He always wanted to be the leader in what- ever was going on and usually he was. It flattered his sense of pride. So now he tossed his head scornfully.

"You are all little fradies, that's what you are!" said he. "I'll show you that I'm not afraid of any old shadows. I'll do it the first chance I get." Wasn't he a silly little Mink?

STORY 1687. July 9, 1917

Illustrations. July 2 to July 7, 1917.

1682. Learning by Doing
Just as soon as they were big enough she took them for a walk in the Green Forest.

1683. Fun and Fish
They went swimming every day.

1684. The First Lesson in Fishing
They climbed up the bank to where their mother lay, each with a fish he had caught.

1685. Something About Shadows
Mrs. Billy warned the five little minks.

1686. The Boldest Little Mink
"I guess," said he, "that I have sense enough to know when danger is near."

The Boldest Little Mink Learns a Lesson

Experience will teach you what
No other teacher can
But heeding what your mother says
Is much the better plan.

The trouble is that learning by experience is sometimes both painful and costly. It is almost sure to be so if you try to do something you have been warned not to do. The boldest of the five little Minks found that out. His experience certainly was painful, and it cost him—well, it very nearly cost him his life, and it did cost him a very great blow to his pride.

Perhaps if his brothers and sisters hadn't kept teasing him about his boasted boldness he wouldn't have been so foolish as he was, but they did tease him, and so he kept on boasting that he wasn't afraid of any old shadows and that he would prove it the very first chance he got. It wasn't long before the chance came. Their mother had left them alone one moonlight night while she and their father, Billy Mink, went fishing. The last thing before she left, she charged the five little Minks not to go out from under the pile of brush under which their home was.

The boldest little Mink waited only long enough to make sure that his mother and father were not somewhere about before he poked his sharp little face but from under the brush pile. The moonlight sifted down through the tree-tops and everywhere were the queerest shadows. Some of them didn't move at all, but some moved whenever the wind swayed the branches above, for these were the shadows of the branches.

The boldest little Mink poked his head out. He could see a big patch of moonlight on the bank of the Laughing Brook. It looked very pleasant out there. The more he looked the more he wanted to go out there to play. Finally, he decided that he would go out there. He teased his brothers and sisters to go with him, but they refused. They remembered what their mother had told them about the fearsome shadow which isn't a shadow at all but Hooty the Owl, and they decided that it was best to be safe. Besides, they had been told not to go out.

So the boldest little Mink went alone, calling the others "fradies" and feeling very big and brave himself He, too, remembered all that his mother had said about Hooty, and he looked closely at all the shadows. He saw how some of them moved and how some didn't, and how all were harmless, and then in the fun of playing in the moonlight on the bank of the Smiling Pond he forgot all about shadows.

By and by, right in the midst of his play, something made him look up. There seemed to be a shadow in the sky. It was moving, drifting straight toward him. He looked at it sharply, for that was a funny place for a shadow to be, but then shadows were everywhere. He listened, but there was no sound. He remembered the warning of his mother to dodge and hide the instant he saw a moving shadow at night, and he remembered his boast that he would like to have Hooty the Owl try to catch him. He eyed the moving shadow more sharply than before. Yes, it was a shadow and therefore nothing to be afraid of. So the boldest little Mink simply sat there and allowed the

shadow to drift almost over him.

Then all in a second, he found himself gazing into two fierce yellow eyes. He jumped and dodged then! Yes, sir, he jumped and dodged then! It is lucky for him that he was born quick in his movements. If it had been any one less quick, it would have been the end of him right then and there. As it was, great, cruel claws clutched at him, and quick as he was two of them caught in his little brown coat and tore it and hurt dreadfully. My, my, my, how those claws did hurt! But his little brown coat tore and, with a squeal of terror, he dodged, under a little, low-growing hemlock tree. Then as soon as he dared, he darted back to the safety of his home. He had learned a lesson.

STORY 1688. July 10, 1917

The Boldest Little Mink is Sulky

Didst ever see a sulky Mink?
  I hope you never will.
A sulky person is, I think,
  A sight that is most ill.

When the boldest little Mink who, you remember, disobeyed his mother and as a result came very, very near to furnishing Hooty the Owl with a dinner, was once more safely under the pile of brush where he should have remained, his brothers and sisters crowded about him. They saw right away how Hooty's claws had torn his coat, and they knew that those claws must have hurt dreadfully. But when they saw that he wasn't so badly hurt he wouldn't get over it they couldn't resist the temptation to say unkind things. No, sir, they couldn't. You see that boldest little Mink had boasted so much and had called them "fradies" so often that now they meant to get even.

"Serves you right, smarty!" said one. "You got your wish, didn't you?" said a second.

"Now perhaps you'll believe that Mother knows something," said a third. It wasn't nice of them a bit. Of course not. I suspect that right down in their hearts they were sorry for the foolish little brother. But he had boasted so much, so often pretended to look down on them because they were not as bold as he that they just didn't want to show their real feelings. But the fourth little Mink, the smallest and most timid of all, went to the boldest little Mink and tried to show him how sorry she was. She gently tried to care for his wounds, but he roughly pushed her aside. He didn't want her about. He didn't want any one about. He wanted to get off by himself. That was because his pride was hurt quite as much as his body. He just wanted to be by himself and sulk. Yes, sir, that's just the word—sulk.

So he crawled off by himself and his brothers and sisters soon left him alone. When his mother returned he wouldn't come out. For one reason he was a little afraid, for you know it was because he was disobedient that he had got in such trouble. For a second reason he was still sulky. He didn't want to be seen by anyone. He wanted just to keep by himself and pity himself. He knew that he had done wrong. He knew that he

had been silly to boast as he had. He knew that he had been very fortunate to escape at all and that the pain of his wounds was no more than he deserved. But it is one thing to admit to yourself that you have done wrong and quite another thing to admit it to others. The boldest little Mink wasn't ready to do that yet.

So he stayed by himself and sulked and sulked and sulked. He could hear his brothers and sisters having a good time and this made him sulk all the more. His mother made him come out where she could look him over and see just how much he was hurt. When she saw that it really wasn't serious, she told him just what one of his brothers had told him—that it served him just right. She said that he ought to be thankful that he had escaped with his life and that she hoped this would be a lesson to him. She licked the wounds very tenderly, which is a way that little four-footed people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows always treat wounds, and then she paid no more attention to him. Instead, she went out for a romp in the moonlight with his brothers and sisters.

So the boldest little Mink crept off by himself once sulked and more and sulked and was very miserable.

STORY 1689. July 11, 1917

The Timidest Little Mink is Laughed at

"Tis better far to have the ring
  Of laughter in your ears
Than foolishly to do a thing
  That will result in tears.

The timidest little Mink was very timid indeed. She was so timid that her brothers and sisters used to make fun of her and tease her and take delight in frightening her every chance they got and they got chances very often. They would spring out at her from the most unexpected places just so see her jump and run. And so the timidest little Mink was kept jumping most of the time. They thought it great fun and laughed at her. It didn't once enter their thoughtless little heads that they not only were unkind, but actually making the timidest little Mink suffer. You know fright often is harder to bear than pain. People have been frightened to death. Once in a great while this happens to one of the little people in the Green Forest and the Green Meadows.

The timidest little Mink knew that it was silly to be so very, very timid, but she had been born that way and just couldn't help it. So there were times when her brothers and sisters made her very unhappy. Not being timid themselves they just didn't understand how the timidest little Mink felt and didn't know that they actually were cruel. Folks often are that way.

The timidest little Mink was the last one to learn to swim because she had been afraid of the water at first. She always was the first to dodge into hiding at the first hint of danger, and she was the last to come out again when the danger was over. She was always "seeing things" and "hearing things" none of the others saw or heard. A dozen

times a day she would send them scampering to hide because she was sure that she had seen or heard something suspicious. After a while it got so that they took no heed of her warnings and simply would laugh at her and go on with whatever they happened to be doing.

It happened one day that while their mother and father were away the five little Minks went out to play on the banks of the Laughing Brook. They were big enough now to be trusted to play outside the heap of brush under which was hidden their home in a hollow log. They had learned enough of the ways of the Great World to know that it wouldn't be safe for them to go for from that sheltering heap of brush, but it was safe enough nearby so long as they were watchful and used their noses and their eyes and their ears as they had learned to do. If danger should appear they could scamper back to the safety of home. So they went to play on the banks of the Laughing Brook.

As usual the timidest little Mink was the last one out. And when she did join her brothers and sisters she didn't at once join in the frolic they were enjoying so much. First she looked this way and looked that way. Then she sniffed and sniffed for any telltale scent that might warn of danger. And at the same time, she listened to every little sound. You see the timidest little Mink was very, very cautious.

She smelled nothing and she heard nothing in the least suspicious, and at first, she saw nothing unusual. But just as she was about to join in the play with her brothers and sisters, it popped into her head that there was something strange, something she couldn't remember having seen before, right near one of her favorite little pools in the Laughing Brook. It was big and black and looked like the stump of a tree. It didn't move. It probably was the stump of a tree, and she just hadn't paid particular attention to it before. Still, made the timidest little Mink uneasy.

Of course, the other little Minks noticed right away that she was uneasy and wanted to know what the matter was. So she asked them if any of them remembered that black stump. Not one of them did.

Then I'm going back where it is safe," declared the timidest little Mink and she did, while the others laughed at her and made fun of her for being afraid of an old black stump.

STORY 1690. July 12, 1917

Timidest Little Mink has Her Turn to Laugh

There is a saying wise and old.
  And often have you heard it told:
Who keeps his laughter till the rest
  Have finished laughing laughs the best.

Of course this is just a way of saying that very often people who laugh at another find they have made a mistake and that they are the ones to be laughed at. Something of the kind happened in the case of the five little Minks who had gone out to play on the bank of the Laughing Brook. The timidest little Mink, who was very timid indeed, had

suddenly discovered what looked like a black stump close by her favorite little pool in the Laughing Brook and she couldn't remember having seen it before. When she asked her brothers and sisters if they remembered it, she found that not one of them did. This was enough for the timidest little Mink. There was something suspicious about that black stump and she promptly decided that the place for her was under the shelter of the pile of brush that hid their home.

How the others did laugh at her and make fun of her for being so afraid of an old black stump. They said she was a silly little thing and called her "fraidy," and said she would run from her own shadow. Finally, they went on with their play, still laughing at their timid little sister until at last they forgot her altogether in the fun they were having. Neither did they give the old black stump another thought.

So they romped and played tag and wrestled and had the best of good times while the timidest little Mink peeped out from under the pile of brush and watched them and envied them and still was afraid to join them because no one could remember having seen that big black stump before. At length the four little Minks grew tired of frolicking. "Let us go fishing," said one.

"Just the thing!" cried another. Who'll catch the first fish?"

To the edge of the Laughing Brook they' scampered and then like true fishermen became very quiet and cautious as they stole around the edge of a little pool watching for careless minnows at play. From one pool to another they went until they came to the pool near which was the big black stump. In this pool was a big school of lively minnows and the eyes of the four little Minks glistened. They didn't even glance at the big black stump. They had no eyes for anything but those minnows in the little pool.

Just as the four little Minks were creeping past the big black stump it suddenly came to life. Yes, sir, that is Just what the big black stump did. It suddenly jumped right at the four little Minks and reached for them with big paws armed with great claws. That big black stump was Buster Bear!

Lucky it was that those four little Minks naturally were quick. Buster Bear himself is quick, but he isn't as quick as lively young Mink. Those four little Minks dodged and darted in four different directions and Buster's big paws missed them altogether, though only by the teeniest, weeniest bit. Then how those four little Minks did scamper back to the safety of the pile of brush where the timidest little Mink was watching. They were so frightened that their teeth chattered.

The timidest little Mink didn't say "I told you so!" She didn't say a word. But by and by the four little brothers and sisters discovered that she was chuckling to herself.

"What are you laughing at?" they demanded.

"My thoughts," said she, and that is all they could get out of her. But they knew what those thoughts were and they knew that her laugh was the best laugh. And in their hearts they decided that never again would they laugh at the timidest little Mink for being afraid.

STORY 1691. July 13, 1917

Jimmy Skunk is Inquisitive

Inquisitiveness often leads
  Right straight to trouble's open door.
And he who tumbles in thereat
  Will be inquisitive no more.

Jimmy Skunk has so little fear of anybody and is so independent because of this that he is apt to be inquisitive about things which don't concern him in the least. Inquisitiveness is, you know, one form of idle curiosity. It is curiosity about the affairs of other people. Jimmy always has been rather inquisitive about things at Farmer Brown's house. That is largely because he knows that everybody there has so much respect for his little bag of scent that they never interfere with him. Even Bowser the Hound keeps at a respectful distance from Jimmy Skunk.

So whenever Jimmy hasn't anything in particular to do, he goes up to Farmer Frown's to see what he can discover about the house or the barn or the hen house. Occasionally he discovers something good to eat. And always he learns something about these queer two-legged creatures called men and the way they live. It was on one of these trips to Farmer Brown's early in the evening that Jimmy discovered a cellar window open. He poked his head inside. It was the first time Jimmy ever had a chance to have a good look inside of Farmer Brown's house. It was dark in there. Of course. It is rather dark in the cellar even in daytime, and quite black at night. But Jimmy Skunk doesn't mind darkness. In fact, he prefers it. He can see quite well enough to suit him. He can smell just as well in the darkness as in the light. Of course. And right now he could smell vegetables and other smells that made him want to see what they could be coming from.

Now, when Jimmy Skunk makes up his mind that he wants to do a thing he usually does it. At least, he tries to do it. One reason for this is his independence. He has grown so used to having everybody step aside for him and allow him to have his own way that he is apt to think he can go anywhere and do anything he pleases. People who have their own way too much are rather inclined to be that way, and it is neither good for them nor for others.

Jimmy poked his head in at the open window in Farmer Brown's cellar and considered. It wasn't very far down to the floor. He wouldn't mind the jump at all. What Jimmy failed to do was to consider how he was to get out again. This didn't enter his head. If he had thought of it, he probably would have said to himself that there would be plenty of time to think of that later. The chief thing was to find out what the inside of that cellar was like.

So without any more waste of time Jimmy jumped down. As I have said before it wasn't a very great jump and Jimmy landed on all four feet without any trouble and at once began to explore that cellar. It was rather disappointing. In fact it was quite disappointing. There was nothing to eat that Jimmy wanted. There were certain stone

jars that he couldn't get into, and there were shelves on which were a great many things that he couldn't reach. There were some barrels also, but what was in them Jimmy couldn't find out. So it didn't take him long to decide that he was no longer Interested in that cellar and better go on about his business. And then, and not until then, Jimmy Skunk found that while that cellar was easy to get into, getting out was quite another matter. He had been too inquisitive for his own good.

STORY 1692. July 14, 1917

Why Farmer Brown's Boy Got No Potatoes

It was the morning after Jimmy Skunk's inquisitiveness had led him to jump down from the window of Farmer Brown's cellar into the cellar to see what it was like down there and if there might not be something good to eat there. Jimmy had been sadly disappointed. There was plenty to eat, but not for Jimmy. Everything was where Jimmy couldn't get at it, and he was disgusted, very much disgusted. But this was nothing compared to his feelings when he discovered that though he had been able to get into that cellar easily he couldn't get out. He couldn't climb to that window, and that was the only way out that he could see. Right then and there he wished that he hadn't been so inquisitive.

For a while Jimmy had prowled around grumbling. Then he had curled up in a corner behind a barrel and gone to sleep. If he couldn't eat, he could sleep, and he had long before learned that the easiest way to forget troubles is to go to sleep. So Jimmy Skunk was curled up behind a barrel fast asleep when Mrs. Brown decided that she wanted some potatoes for dinner and went down cellar to get them.

Now, like most of the little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, Jimmy Skunk is a light sleeper. Suddenly his eyes flew wide open. There was a queer noise inside that barrel behind which he was curled up. It sounded interesting. Jimmy cocked up one ear, then the other, and listened. He wasn't sure whether those sounds came from inside the barrel or from the other side of the barrel or from bath. He would investigate and find out. Slowly he got to his feet, for you know he never hurries, yawned, and then calmly walked around the barrel. Now, Mrs Brown had nearly filled her apron with potatoes and was just reaching for a last one when in the half light of the cellar she saw something white moving.

"My land!" she exclaimed. "What can that be?"

She stared for half a minute and then she saw clearly that that white thing was the broad stripe on Jimmy Skunk's back. That was all she waited to see. Yes, sir, that was all she waited to see. She screamed. Yes, sir, Mrs. Brown screamed. At the same time, she let go of her apron and away went the potatoes in every direction over the floor of the cellar. One of them actually hit Jimmy Skunk on the head. It almost made him lose his temper. But it didn't quite, which was fortunate for Mrs. Brown.

As for the latter she scrambled up those cellar stairs in a way that wasn't in the least dignified. In fact, she went up those stairs faster than she ever had climbed them

before, and when she got to the top she slammed the door and locked it. Yes, sir, she locked it just as if she expected Jimmy Skunk to open it if it wasn't locked.

"For goodness sake, what is the matter?" demanded Farmer Brown's boy, who happened to come into the kitchen just then. "Is there a burglar down cellar?"

"No-o," panted Mrs. Brown, "but there is a Skunk down there. He walked right out from behind the potato barrel and I guess you'll go without potatoes for your dinner. However we are going to get him out of there I don't know. Isn't it terrible!"

Farmer Brown's boy grinned. And down in the cellar Jimmy Skunk was grinning too.

STORY 1693. July 16, 1917

Several Folks are Puzzled

Several folks were puzzled, very much puzzled. Farmer Brown was puzzled. Mrs. Brown was puzzled. Farmer Brown's boy was puzzled. Jimmy Skunk was puzzled. And all were puzzled by the same thing. Yes, sir, all were puzzled by the same thing. Jimmy Skunk was in Farmer Brown's cellar. It had been easy enough to get in there. But how was he to get out again? That is the thing that was puzzling all of them.

Now Jimmy Skunk wasn't one bit more anxious to get out of that cellar than Farmer Brown and Mrs. Brown and Farmer Brown's boy were to have him get out. If there was nothing for Jimmy to eat down there, there was a great deal that others wanted to eat, but which they couldn't get while Jimmy was there because—well, to tell the truth they didn't dare go down to get those things they wanted and needed while Jimmy was there. They were afraid of that little bag of scent he always carries with him and is so ready to use if he thinks that any harm is intended. They didn't want to harm Jimmy, but they were afraid he would think they did, which would amount to the same thing.

"I tell you what it is, Mother," said Farmer Brown's boy, "you leave the door from the kitchen to the cellar open and the door out of doors open and perhaps Jimmy Skunk will come up the cellar stairs and so find his way out."

But Mrs. Brown just threw up her hands in dismay at the very idea. It was bad enough to have Jimmy in the cellar. As for giving him a chance to get into her kitchen, even if only to pass through it, she wouldn't listen to such a thing.

"Then I'll make a box-trap and set it down there for him," said Farmer Brown's boy.

But Mrs. Brown wouldn't listen to this either. "You would have to go down there in order to set it and just as likely as not he would use that scent of his while you were there, and it is so strong that there would be no living in the house then. No, sir, nobody goes into that cellar while that Skunk is there!"

Farmer Brown proposed that he take the terrible gun and shoot Jimmy from the

Illustrations. July 9 to June 14, 1917.

1687. The Boldest Little Mink Learns a Lesson
Then all in a second, he found himself gazing into two fierce yellow eyes.

1688. The Boldest Little Mink is Sulky
She said that he ought to be thankful.

1689. The Timidest Little Mink is Laughed at
So she asked if any of them remembered that black stump.

1690. Timidest Little Mink has Her Turn to Laugh
The big black stump was Buster Bear.

1691. Jimmy Skunk is Inquisitive
There were certain stone jars that he couldn't get into.

1692. Why Farmer Brown's Boy Got No Potatoes
Away went the potatoes.

cellar window, but Farmer Brown's boy wouldn't listen to that because right down in his heart he was sorry for Jimmy. You see he really is a friend of Jimmy. Besides he didn't think that Jimmy had done anything that deserved anything so terrible as to be killed. The truth is Farmer Brown's boy had a feeling of something very like sympathy for Jimmy Skunk. He had been in trouble more than once through inquisitiveness himself. He had a sort of fellow feeling for Jimmy Skunk and he wouldn't listen to having him killed, whereas Farmer Brown himself was secretly pleased.

"All right, son," said he, "if you won't let him be killed, it is for you to get him out. It would be better to shoot him than to allow him to starve to death down there and starve to death he will unless he can get out. Besides, there are things in that cellar which we want. What are you going to do about It?"

"I'm going to the barn to think it over," replied Farmer Brown's boy, and out to the barn he went.

STORY 1694. July 17, 1917

Jimmy Skunk Gets Out

To every trouble, small and great,
There comes an ending soon or late.

Just remember that the next time you are in trouble. It is always so. Sometimes it is hard to believe that there will be an end, but there will. It was hard for Jimmy Skunk to believe that his troubles would end, but they did. That is, that particular trouble did. He had walked round and round and round Farmer Brown's cellar looking for a way to get out, but there was no way. He had stared up at that little window through which he had entered and had wished for wings that he might fly up to it, which was foolish. And he had grown very, very hungry, and all the time was growing hungrier. You see he had been down in that cellar two days with nothing to eat because he could hear Farmer Brown's boy outside and sometimes could catch glimpses of him. After a while all was still. Jimmy waited a little longer and then crept out to see what had come in through that window, and he was all ready to use that little bag of scent if it was anything that seemed to promise danger. But all he found was a long board that reached from the floor of the cellar up to the little window. Jimmy sat down and looked at it suspiciously. Then he went round to the other side and did the same thing. Finally he ventured near enough to sniff at it. It was just a board, that was all.

"Now what can that be for?" thought Jimmy and scratched his head. "Whatever it is for it would be just the thing for me if I could climb like Happy Jack Squirrel."

He went around to the end where he could look up the whole length of that long board. There he made a discovery. There were little cross-pieces all the way up that board. Jimmy looked at them thoughtfully. "I believe I can walk up that without tumbling off," thought he. "Anyway I'll try it."

So Jimmy started up the long board and he found that those little cross- pieces made it very easy for him to walk without danger of falling off. Up and up and up he

walked and presently he was at the window, and a second later he was outside. Not far away was Farmer Brown's boy and he was grinning until all the freckles on his face seemed to run together into one big freckle.

"How do you like my ladder, Jimmy Skunk?" he cried.

But Jimmy made no reply. He paid no attention to Farmer Brown's boy at all. In fact he did what he rarely does—he hurried. He hurried straight over to the grass and there he began to catch grasshoppers as fast as ever he could. He was hungry, was Jimmy Skunk.

Farmer Brown's boy watched him and laughed.

"Go it, Jimmy!" he cried. "If you keep on catching grasshoppers at that rate, I guess you will pay me for all the trouble I went to make that ladder for you."

Then he pulled up that long board and closed the window. As for Jimmy Skunk he went right on catching grasshoppers just as if he were on the Green Meadows instead of in Farmer Brown's dooryard with Farmer Brown's boy and Mrs. Brown and Farmer Brown and Bowser the Hound and Black Pussy all watching him. Jimmy Skunk is nothing if not independent.

STORY 1695. July 18, 1917

Peter Rabbit Calls on Grandfather Frog

When there is something you don't know,
    Just ask!
No harm can come from asking, so
    Just ask!
'Tis thus that knowledge is obtained;
The things worth knowing thus are gained;
    Just ask!

Peter Rabbit found that out long ago. Perhaps that is why his ears are regular question marks. Peter is very curious, very curious indeed. He is brimming over with curiosity. It gets him into a great deal of trouble. At the same time, he learns a great many things worth knowing that he wouldn't learn if he were less curious.

Every so often Peter goes over to the Smiling Pool to call on Grandfather Frog. Grandfather Frog, you know, is accounted very old and very wise. Perhaps it is because he looks wise. Anyway his neighbors look on him as very wise. At least many of them do. Peter Rabbit among them.

It happened one day that Peter, having nothing else to do, ran over to the Smiling Pool for one of these calls on Grandfather Frog. Peter had nothing in particular on his mind. Usually he does have, and Grandfather Frog has got so that he expects Peter to beg for a story. As usual, Grandfather Frog was sitting on his big green lily-pad watching for foolish green flies or anything else worth eating that might come his way. He saw Peter before Peter saw him.

“Chug-a-rum!” exclaimed Grandfather Frog in his deepest, gruffest voice. “What is it this time, Peter Rabbit? I never saw such a fellow for asking questions, Chug-a-rum! What is it now?” Peter grinned. He was quite used to Grandfather Frog’s gruffness. He knew that it was just Grandfather Frog’s way, and it didn’t trouble him a bit.

“Nothing at all, Grandfather Frog Nothing at all,” said he. “I’ve just run over to pass the time of day and see how you are getting on. It’s nice weather, isn’t it?”

Grandfather Frog opened his big mouth to reply, but instead he suddenly closed it again and took a long dive into the Smiling Pool. He had caught a glimpse of Longlegs the Heron stalking along the bank, and Grandfather Frog had no desire to explore the inside of Longlegs’ long throat.

Peter was disappointed. He had come way over there to call on Grandfather Frog, and now Grandfather Frog was somewhere down on the bottom of the Smiling Pool, all because of Longlegs the Heron. Peter didn’t know whether to go home again or wait. Finally he decided to see what Longlegs would do. If Longlegs should decide to wait for Grandfather Frog to return he, Peter, would go home. He had learned that Longlegs has more patience than he has. But Longlegs didn’t wait. He knew Grandfather Frog too well for that. If it had been a young Frog he would have settled himself to wait, but he knew that Grandfather Frog was altogether too wise from long experience to be caught that way. Waiting for him would be a waste of time. So Longlegs gravely stalked along and disappeared down the Laughing Brook,

Peter sat on the bank of the Smiling Pool and stared down into the water where Grandfather Frog had disappeared. And while he waited and watched he began to wonder how it was that Grandfather Frog could stay down under water so long without air.

STORY 1696. July 19, 1917

Peter Rabbit Has a Question Ready

The longer Peter Rabbit sat staring into the Smiling Pool waiting for Grandfather Frog to appear once more the more he wondered how it was possible for Grandfather Frog to stay down under water so long. He knew that when sitting on his big, green lily-pad Grandfather Frog breathed air just as he did himself. He knew it because he had seen him breathing. But how could Grandfather Frog hold his breath so long under water? Peter tried holding his own breath, but he could hold it for only a very little while and it seemed to him as if he surely would burst if he didn’t let it out quickly.

So he sat and waited and waited and waited and wondered and wondered. And the longer he waited the more he wondered. He often had watched Jerry Muskrat dive and disappear, but he knew that Jerry came up somewhere under the bank out of sight where he could get the air. He knew that Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter did the same thing. Could it be that Grandfather Frog was doing this? Or could it be that Grandfather Frog was poking just the tip of his nose out of water hidden by a lily-pad?

Peter look this way and looked that way very carefully, but there was no sign of Grandfather Frog anywhere. Once more Peter fixed his eyes on the spot where Grandfather Frog had disappeared. The water was very clear and he could see the bottom plainly. Suddenly the soft mud at the very place where he had last seen Grandfather Frog began to stir and presently who should appear but Grandfather Frog himself. Peter could see him swimming up to the top, and in a second or two out popped Grandfather Frog's nose and two big goggly eyes. For a minute he blinked as he looked this way and that way. Then he swam with powerful strokes of his long hind legs straight toward his big, green lily-pad, and climbed out.

"Chug-a-rum! Where has that long-legged robber gone?" he demanded, meaning Longlegs the Heron.

"Down the Laughing Brook," replied Peter. "He didn't waste any time waiting for you, Grandfather Frog."

"Hump!" exclaimed Grandfather Frog. "He has got more sense than I gave him credit for. Were you saying something when he came along, Peter?"

"I said it was a fine day," replied Peter.

"Hump!" grunted Grandfather Frog again. "It seems to me that I remember that you said you hadn't anything in particular on your mind this morning. There must be something wrong with you this morning, Peter Rabbit. There certainly must be something wrong with you if you haven't any questions."

Peter chuckled. "I didn't have a single question in my mind when I came over here. Honest and true, black and blue, I didn't have, Grandfather Frog. But I've got one now," replied Peter.

"I suppose you've been spending your time thinking it up while I was down there on the bottom of the Smiling Pool," grumbled Grandfather Frog. "I never saw such a fellow for questions. Well, what is it?"

"If you please, Grandfather Frog, tell me how it is you can hold your breath so long," replied Peter eagerly.

STORY 1697[29]. July 20, 1917

Grandfather Frog Explains How He Breathes

Grandfather Frog's eyes twinkled. "Chug-a-rum!" said he. You know he always begins with "chug-a-rum." It wouldn't be Grandfather Frog if he didn't. "Chug-a-rum!" said he. "I knew you had something on your mind, Peter. There would be something wrong with you if you didn't have a question to ask."

"But truly, Grandfather Frog, I didn't when I came over here. It was seeing you go down to the bottom of the Smiling Pond and stay down so long that set me to wondering how you can hold your breath so long. I don't know of anybody else who

29 Compare to Burgess's letter to the Old Mother Nature Club, June 30, 1917 (Appendix 2).

can do it," replied Peter.

"What makes you think I hold my breath? Chug-a-rum! What makes you think I hold my breath, Peter Rabbit?" demanded Grandfather Frog.

"Well, if you don't how can you stay down under water like that?" retorted Peter. "I've watched Jerry Muskrat and Billy Mink and Little Joe Otter, and each of them has to come up in a very little while to get more air. They can stay down only as long as they can hold their breath. If they didn't come up for fresh air they would drown. Jerry Muskrat told me so. I don't see how you can hold your breath so long. How do you do it, Grandfather Frog?"

"I don't," replied Grandfather Frog, and chuckled at the look on Peter's face. "I don't hold my breath at all," he continued.

"What?" cried Peter. "You don't hold your breath at all? You are trying to fool me, Grandfather Frog."

"Watch me dive," replied Grandfather Frog, and made a beautiful long dive into the water. A minute or so later he was back on his big green lily pad. "Did you see any bubbles?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Peter.

"That was the air from my lungs that I was getting rid of," explained Grandfather Frog.

Peter looked more puzzled than ever and Grandfather Frog opened his big mouth and laughed. "How do fishes breathe?" he asked.

Peter shook his head. "I didn't suppose they did breathe. Rather, I never thought about it," he replied.

"Well, they do," replied Grandfather Frog. There is air in the water and they get this air through their gills. The next time you see Mr. Trout in the water, watch him. You will see him opening and shutting his gills. That is his way of breathing. Now, when I am down under water I don't need much air and what I do need I can get from the water. I haven't got gills, but I have a very peculiar and convenient skin, and when I am under water it acts like a sort of gill. I get all the air I want or need from the water, and so I can stay under water as long as I please, and as I said before I don't hold my breath. I can't imagine anything more uncomfortable than holding one's breath."

Peter Rabbit's eyes looked as if they would pop out of his head. "Why," he gasped at last, "you really are wonderful, Grandfather Frog! You really are wonderful!"

"Chug-a-rum!" exclaimed Grandfather Frog. "It has taken you a long time to find it out, Peter."

STORY 1698. July 21, 1917

Grandfather Frog Has a Trying Day

Peter Rabbit so often has to run for his life that sometimes he is a wee bit inclined to envy some of his neighbors because it seems to him that they have an easier time that he does. But that is largely because Peter doesn't know all that his neighbors have to contend with. He doesn't know all their troubles and dangers. It is just that way with most of us. We envy our neighbors when quite as likely as not those very same neighbors have worries and troubles a great deal worse than our own.

So it was that Peter Rabbit often had envied Grandfather Frog. "All he has to do is to sit on his big green lily-pad all day and wait for foolish green flies and other things just as foolish to come his way. Nothing to worry about. O, it's an easy life that Grandfather Frog leads," said Peter more than once. Perhaps Peter would have changed his mind if he could have seen Grandfather Frog on this particular day I am going to tell you about.

To begin with, Grandfather Frog had begun the day by climbing up the bank on the Smiling Pool to look for a change of fare. You see he likes variety in his bill of fare. It was very early in the morning, so early that jolly, round, red Mr. Sun had not yet shown his face over the edge of the world. Just from pure joy Grandfather Frog sat down and with his great, bass voice led the Smiling Pool chorus. Two minutes later, as he was taking a long breath for an extra loud "Chug-a-rum," out of the corner of his left eye he caught a glimpse of something moving. "Chug," said Grandfather Frog and without waiting to finish he made a flying leap for the Smiling Pool. A minute later from way out in the middle of the Smiling Pool he looked back. Bobby Coon was sitting on the bank in the very spot Grandfather Frog had been. Bobby was grinning, but at the same time he looked disappointed.

That was the beginning of that day. It made Grandfather Frog feel out of sorts. He wouldn't dare go hunting on that bank until he was quite positive that Bobby Coon had gone back to the Green Forest. So he swam over among the bulrushes where he could sit on the bottom with just his head out of water and tried to recover his spirits. He had almost recovered them when he discovered Longlegs the Heron slowly and carefully stalking along the shore. Grandfather Frog didn't wait to say good morning. He didn't wait at all. He made a frantic jump for deep water and breathed easier when he knew he was beyond the reach of Longlegs.

Longlegs settled himself among the bulrushes with his head drawn back on his shoulders as if he intended to spend the rest of the day there, so Grandfather Frog, more out of sorts than ever, swam to his big, green lily-pad and climbed out on it. Some foolish green flies coming his way, he began to feel better. He was just wondering if it would be safe to take a brief nap when he saw a shadow moving across the Smiling Pool. Grandfather Frog rolled his big goggly eyes up to see what made that shadow, then with a regular squawk of anger dived once more. The cause of that shadow was Redtail the Hawk.

This time Grandfather Frog stayed down in the mud for a long time. He was safe down there, and it was better to be safe even if he did have to give up his usual sun bath. When at last he did decide to come up he was very careful to put just his eyes and nose above water and look well to see that the way was clear. It was well he did, for

almost the first thing he saw was the head of Mr. Watersnake close by his big, green lily-pad. Without making a ripple Grandfather Frog sank out of sight and hastened to bury himself in the mud once more, for of all those who seek him he fears none so much as Mr. Watersnake.

It was dusk before Grandfather Frog ventured up again. This time the way was clear and he climbed out on his big green lily pad to lead the evening chorus as usual. But he had been singing not quite half an hour when another shadow seemed to drift over the Smiling Pool. Grandfather Frog knew that it was no real shadow this time; it was Hooty the Owl. So once more he sought the safety of the mud at the bottom of the Smiling Pool. So ended a trying day. If Peter Rabbit could have seen all that had happened I doubt if ever again he would envy Grandfather Frog.

STORY 1699. July 23, 1917

A Surprise Party

Peter Rabbit likes surprise parties, just as most of us do. At least, he likes pleasant surprise parties. In the course of his life he gets a great many surprises, and not always pleasant ones. But some are pleasant, and these he always enjoys.

Now, a surprise party to be a perfect success must be a surprise. Of course. It must be wholly unexpected. This is just the kind of a surprise party that Peter Rabbit had one morning when he took it into his head to run over to the Smiling Pool to see what was going on there. A surprise party was the very last thing in the world to enter Peter's head. He wasn't looking for a party of any kind. All he had in mind was a bit of gossip with Grandfather Frog or any of the other little people of the Smiling Pool.

So he hopped along in his usual happy-go-lucky way, lipperty-lipperty-lip, across the Green Meadows toward the Smiling Pool. Just a little back from the bank of the Smiling Pool he sat down to rest a minute, and, as a matter of common sense, to look this way and that way to make sure that the way was clear and that no danger was near. Now right at Peter's feet was a little sandy spot where no grass was growing. It was only a little spot, and probably Peter wouldn't have noticed it at all but for one thing. Just by chance he happened to glance down, and it seemed to him that that sand moved ever so little.

Peter rubbed his eyes and looked very hard. Yes, sir; that sand moved. "That's queer thought Peter. "I wonder if it can be possible that Old Mr. Toad has buried himself here. I think I'll wait a bit and see what happens."

So Peter sat still right where he was and stared at the little sandy spot. It was very clear that something was moving down out of sight. Sand never moves of itself, not in a flat place any way, and this sand was moving. Suddenly a little black head popped out right before Peter's very eyes. It was the funniest little head he ever had seen. The two tiny eyes winked and blinked. Peter sat very still. Two of the funniest little feet in the world followed the head into sight and then out of the sand came the whole of a very small person, a very small person, indeed. It was a baby. There was no doubt about that.

Illustrations. July 16 to June 21, 1917.

1693. Several Folks are Puzzled
And out to the barn he went.

1694. Jimmy Skunk Gets Out
He paid no attention to Farmer Brown's Boy at all.

1695. Peter Rabbit Calls on Grandfather Frog
Peter sat on the bank of the Smiling Pool and stared down into the water.

1696. Peter Rabbit Has a Question Ready
"Chug-a-rum! Where has that long-legged robber gone?" he demanded.

1697. Grandfather Frog Explains How He Breathes
"Watch me dive," replied Grandfather Frog.

1698. Grandfather Frog Has a Trying Day
Once more he sought the safety of the mud at the bottom of the Smiling Pool.

And Peter didn't need to ask whose baby It was. No one but Spotty the Turtle could have any such looking baby as that.

For a few minutes this baby of Spotty's rested from his efforts to dig his way out of the sand, and then with very wabbly little legs began to scramble in the direction of the Smiling Pool. Yes, sir, he headed straight for the Smiling Pool, just as if he knew exactly where it was.

Peter was just going to follow, when he once more glanced at that sandy spot. The sand was moving in another place. Peter sat still. In a few minutes out popped another of Spotty's babies and started after the first one. Then a third and a fourth and a fifth and a sixth and a seventh appeared, and each, in turn, started straight for the Smiling Pool.

It was the most surprising surprise party that ever Peter had known.

STORY 1700. July 24, 1917

Jimmy Skunk is Strangely Interested

Peter Rabbit sat a little back from the Smiling Pool, staring at one of the funniest processions ever seen—seven very tiny Turtles scrambling with rather wabbly legs straight for the Smiling Pool. One behind another they scrambled along as fast as their wabbly little legs could take them. Over the edge of the bank the first one disappeared. Then the second, likewise, disappeared. So did the third, and then the fourth. The fifth went next and then the sixth. Last of all the seventh little Turtle wabbled over the edge of the bank and Peter was left staring at nothing in particular.

Peter blinked, rubbed his eyes, blinked again, once more rubbed his eyes and then drew a long breath. "Did I see them, or didn't I?" he asked, staring up at jolly, round, bright Mr. Sun. Of course, Mr. Sun didn't answer, and so just to make sure that he did see them, Peter hurried after the seven little Turtles and peered over the bank. Right down below paddling in the water he saw the seven little Turtles and the sight of them lifted a load from Peter's mind. You see the sight was so unexpected that he wasn't quite sure about his eyes. He feared that they might be playing him tricks. When he saw those seven little Turtles in the water, he knew that he surely had seen them on the way to the water.

Satisfied that he had seen what he had seen, Peter returned to the spot where he had seen the seven little Turtles appear as by magic from the innocent looking sand. He wanted to have another look at it. Just as he reached it, out crawled another baby Turtle, the smallest of all, and at once started the way his brothers and sisters had gone—toward the Smiling Pool. He didn't hesitate a second but started off in the right direction quite as if he had been that way before, which, of course, he hadn't.

Peter watched him disappear over the edge of the bank of the Smiling Pool, then turned to that magic little sandy spot in the Green Meadows out of which bay Turtles seemed to grow as grass grew in other places.

“I wonder if there will be any more,” thought Peter, and waited patiently.

But, though he waited and waited, nothing happened. No more baby Turtles came popping out of that little sandy place. “I wonder if I would find any more if I should dig there?” thought he. “I have half a mind to try it.”

Just then along came Jimmy Skunk. “Hello, Peter! What are you staring at so hard?” he asked.

Peter told him all about the eight little Turtles who had given him such a surprise. Before he had finished Jimmy Skunk had begun to dig in that sandy place and for once he actually hurried. He fairly made the sand fly. But all he found were some bits of something white that looked like bits of egg-shell. At last Jimmy gave up.

“There isn’t another one there,” he sighed regretfully. “And to think I have passed right by this very spot without once guessing that Mrs. Spotty had made her nest here! Just my luck,” muttered Jimmy. “Just my luck.”

And without another word he went his way, leaving Peter Rabbit fairly bursting with questions.

STORY 1701. July 25, 1917

Peter Rabbit is Full of Questions

Now when there’s something you don’t know
  And have no way of guessing.
‘Tis then you’ll find a ready tongue
  A most decided blessing.

Peter has the ready tongue. Natural curiosity has given it to him. He is always full of questions. Some people like to find out things for themselves. Peter prefers the easier way of asking questions. Sometimes he learns the truth and quite as often he gets things all wrong. It all depends on whether or not those he questions really know what they are talking about. If you are going to ask questions, make sure that you ask the right people.

Now, when Jimmy Skunk marched off without another word and left Peter by the little sandy spot out of which he had seen the eight baby turtles pop and then waddle off to the Smiling Pool and scramble down the bank into the water Peter was just bursting with questions which he wanted to ask. He had already begun to guess some things, but guessing wasn’t knowing for sure. He was tempted to follow Jimmy Skunk. It was clear that Jimmy wasn’t in the least puzzled by what had happened in that little shady spot. It was also clear that Jimmy Skunk was quite put out about something.

“There’s no use in asking him questions,” thought Peter, sitting down to scratch his long left ear with his long right hind foot, a way he has when he is puzzled. “Usually Jimmy is good natured, but when he isn’t, it is safest to keep out of his way. It is clear enough that he knows all about those little Turtles and what they were doing here, and he could tell me all about them if he would. But I don’t know anybody I would quite so

hate to bother with questions when he isn't feeling real good as Jimmy Skunk. I think I'll go ask Grandfather Frog."

So Peter stopped scratching his long left ear with his long right hind foot and started for the Smiling Pool to look for Grandfather Frog. Now it happened that Grandfather Frog had caught a glimpse of Plunger the Fish Hawk only a few minutes before, and though Plunger was high in the blue, blue sky Grandfather Frog had at once decided that he needed a rest in the soft mud at the bottom of the Smiling Pool. He has great respect for Plunger's keen eyes and great claws, has Grandfather Frog.

So when Peter peeped over the bank of the Smiling Pool there was no one to be seen on the big green lily-pad where Grandfather Frog delights to sit. Peter was disappointed, very much disappointed. He looked this way and looked that way. A little farther along was an old log one end of which was in the water. On the end were Spotty the Turtle and Mrs. Spotty enjoying a sunbath.

"The very ones!" exclaimed Peter. "They ought to be able to tell me what I want to know even better than Grandfather Frog."

He hurried along the bank until he was right opposite Spotty and Mrs. Spotty. He was so full of questions that he didn't even wait to say good morning.

"Spotty," he cried, "What were eight little Turtles doing in a sandy spot up on the Green Meadows; how did they get there? Why did they bury themselves in the sand? Why haven't I ever seen them before? How did they know the way to the Smiling Pool? Do they belong to you? Why did Jimmy Skunk begin to dig right away in that place when I told him about it? Why did he seem so disappointed when he couldn't find anything there?"

Yes, indeed, Peter Rabbit was full of questions.

STORY 1702. July 26, 1917

Spotty the Turtle Answers Peter's Questions

Spotty the Turtle looked up from the end of the log on which he was taking a sunbath and grinned at Peter Rabbit as Peter poured out the questions he was so full of. Then, instead of answering Peter at once, he turned to Mrs. Spotty.

"My dear," said he, "don't you think that it may be a good idea to have a look at the babies now that they are hatched?"

Mrs. Spotty said nothing, but apparently she thought well of the suggestion for she slid off the old log into the water, dived and Peter caught a glimpse of her headed in the direction of the place where he had last seen the eight little Turtles. Spotty looked up at Peter and slowly winked one eye.

"Those," said he, "are my babies, though I never have seen them."

"What!" exclaimed Peter. "Do you mean to tell me that you never have seen your own babies? Why, the idea! The very idea! I should think you would rush right off to

see them now."

Spotty grinned. "O, I'll see them soon enough," said he. "The first thing I know they will be sunning themselves on this very log. I don't believe in wasting so much time on children as some people I know of do. Let them learn for themselves. That's what I had to do. Were you asking a moment ago what these babies of mine were doing up there in that sandy spot on the Green Meadows?"

Peter nodded. "They were buried in the sand when I got there," said he, "and one after another they dug their way out. What were they there for?"

"Where else should they have been?" demanded Spotty. "That is where their mother hid the eggs they came from."

"Do you mean they came from eggs just as the birds do?" asked Peter, his eyes round with curiosity.

"Certainly," replied Spotty.

"And—and did Mrs. Spotty keep those eggs warm the way a bird does?" asked Peter.

"Certainly not!" exclaimed Spotty in a tone of great disgust. "She dug a hole for them in the sand and then she covered them up with sand and that was enough. She hasn't been near the place since."

"But—but—" Peter paused.

"But what?" asked Spotty.

"I thought eggs had to be kept warm in order to hatch. That is what Mrs. Grouse says," replied Peter.

"Of course," retorted Spotty promptly. "They were kept warm—warm enough, anyway. That is why Mrs. Spotty picked out that particular spot. Mr. Sun did the work for her. He warmed the sand and the sand kept the eggs warm and so all in good time the eggs hatched. There is nothing like knowing how to get others to work for you, Peter."

"Why did Jimmy act so disappointed?" persisted Peter.

Spotty grinned. "Jimmy has a liking for Turtle eggs, and I suspected he would not object to some tender young turtles before their shells begin to harden," explained Spotty. "He spent a good many hours hunting for those eggs and I suspect that when you showed him where they had been hidden he felt a little upset to think he had been so near them so many times and hadn't found them."

A great light dawned on Peter. He understood, and he grinned as he thought how he would have felt if he had been in Jimmy Skunk's place.

STORY 1703[30]. July 27, 1917

30 Compare to Burgess's letter to the Old Mother Nature Club, July 21, 1917 (Appendix 2).

Grandfather Frog's Eyes

When Peter Rabbit left Spotty the Turtle he went back where the lily-pads are to see if Grandfather Frog had appeared. Sure enough he was there sitting on his big green lily-pad and looking as wise as ever. Peter was so full of what he had learned about the babies of Spotty the Turtle that he just had to tell someone, and so he started in to tell Grandfather Frog.

Grandfather Frog listened awhile and then interrupted. "Peter," said he, "I've known all this since before you were born. I'm surprised at you. Yes, sir, I'm surprised at you. I'm surprised that anyone could have known another as long as you have known Spotty and still know so little about him. It is a funny thing to me how people can go along day after day and not see things right under their very noses."

Peter looked a little put out, and Grandfather Frog grinned.

"Don't feel badly about it, Peter," he added. "You are not the only one. My goodness, no! You are not the only one! What is more, I suspect that it is a good thing for some of us that it is so. If everybody knew everything about everybody else life would be harder for some of us than it is. Yes, sir, a great deal harder."

Grandfather Frog rolled his great goggly eyes up at Peter in such a droll way that Peter laughed right out. Just then Peter, who was up on the bank and could see across the Green Meadows, while Grandfather Frog down below couldn't, saw Whitetail the Marsh Hawk headed that way.

"Here comes old Whitetail!" cried Peter, and made ready to run for safety if need be.

Grandfather Frog waited to hear no more. His long hind legs straightened out, and with a long dive, a smooth dive, he disappeared in the water. Perhaps I shouldn't say he disappeared, for he didn't until he reached the mud at the bottom of the Smiling Pool. Peter could see him all the way from the surface of the water way down to the bottom. He could see with what powerful kicks of those long hind legs and big feet Grandfather Frog drove himself through the water. He could I see that when Grandfather Frog drew those long legs up for a kick the toes of his big webbed feet drew together so that his feet were very narrow and slipped through the water easily, but that when he kicked back the toes were widely spread and the web between them made his feet very big and broad. Of course, these pushed against the water and drove Grandfather Frog ahead at a great rate.

And then Peter noticed something that quite startled him. Yes, sir, he did. "My land!" exclaimed Peter, "whatever has happened to Grandfather Frog's eyes?"

Grandfather Frog's eyes always had interested Peter. You know they are great bulging, goggly eyes, standing right up from his head. Peter never had seen any other eyes at all like them save those of Old Mr. Toad, and these are not nearly so goggly as Grandfather Frog's. But now as Grandfather Frog swam those eyes no longer stood up from the top of his head. At least, it didn't seem so to Peter. It looked to him very much as if they were flat down, level with Grandfather Frog's head. Right away Peter felt

that he had discovered something. He fairly itched with curiosity. Then just in time he remembered old Whitetail and scampered to a certain hole between the roots of the Big Hickory Tree on the bank of the Smiling Pool.

STORY 1704. July 28, 1917

Eyes that Go Up and Down

Peter Rabbit waited only long enough to make sure that old Whitetail the Marsh Hawk had gone on about his business. Then he hurried out from his hiding place between the roots of the big Hickory Tree over to the bank of the Smiling Pool to await the return of Grandfather Frog to his big green lily-pad. Peter was brimming over with curiosity about those big goggly eyes of Grandfather Frog. You see he had discovered that when Grandfather Frog was swimming under water those eyes no longer seemed big and goggly. He couldn't understand it and he wanted to.

So Peter impatiently waited for Grandfather Frog to reappear. After what seemed to Peter a very long time, he saw the mud at the bottom of the Smiling Pool at the spot where Grand- father Frog had disappeared begin to stir. Then he saw Grandfather Frog himself swimming up toward the surface. Peter looked very hard and as before it seemed to him that Grandfather Frog's eyes were no longer goggly. They seemed to him to be quite level, with the top of his head. But the instant Grandfather Frog reached the surface and stopped swimming his eyes stood out from his head as goggly as ever.

The instant Grandfather Frog got his head above the water he rolled his eyes this way and that way. "Chug-a-rum!" said he. "Has that robber gone?" Of course he meant Whitetail the Marsh Hawk.

"Yes," replied Peter, "He is way over on the farther side of the Green Meadows looking for Danny Meadow Mouse."

Grandfather Frog at once swam over to his favorite big green lily-pad and climbed out on it. Peter hardly waited for him to get settled comfortably before he asked a question.

"What happens to your eyes when you are swimming under water?" he asked.

"What happens to my eyes? Nothing happens to them," replied Grandfather Frog rather testily. "I take care that nothing shall. Eyes are too important to allow anything to happen to them. Why should you think anything happens to them?"

"Because," replied Peter, in a hesitating, uncertain voice, "because when I watched you swimming your eyes didn't seem to stick up the way they do now."

"Of course they didn't seem to for the very good reason that they didn't," retorted Grandfather Frog, still rather testily. "Certainly not! I took good care that they shouldn't. I lowered them."

"You what?" cried Peter.

"I lowered them," replied Grandfather Frog shortly. "I lowered them down into my

head where they would be safe."

"Do you mean to tell me that you can make your eyes go up and down?" cried Peter, his own eyes looking as if they might pop right out of his head. "Do you mean to tell me that, Grandfather Frog?"

"Certainly," retorted Grandfather Frog. "No one going through the water as fast as I do when I am swimming can afford to have his eyes sticking out. So I just lower them out of the way."

"But then how do you see?" asked Peter.

"I don't see," retorted Grandfather Frog. "When I want to see I slow down or stop swimming and just raise them for a look and then lower them and go on again."

"I never heard of such a thing!" exclaimed Peter.

"Huh!" grunted Grandfather Frog. "There are plenty of things you never have heard of, Peter Rabbit."

And Peter concluded that it was so.

STORY 1705. July 30, 1917

Peter Grows Curious about Ol' Mr. Buzzard

The more we have the more we want;
  At least I find that true
With almost everyone I know.
  Pray, is it so with you?

Peter Rabbit had learned so many curious and interesting things about Spotty the Turtle and Grandfather Frog that his head almost ached as he left the Smiling Pool and started for the Green Forest that morning. You would think that Peter's curiosity ought to have been satisfied for once, but it wasn't. You see curiosity is one of those things that seldom is really satisfied.

As Peter hopped along, lipperty-lipperty-lip, he looked up to see that Redtail the Hawk was not near enough to be dangerous. There was no sign of Redtail, but high up in the blue, blue sky, sailing round and round, was Ol' Mistah Buzzard.

Now ever since Ol' Mistah Buzzard had come up the first time from way down in Ol' Virginny to make his home in the Green Forest for the Summer, Peter had been greatly interested in him. In the first place no one else could sail and sail and sail without moving his wings as could Ol' Mistah Buzzard. In the second place Ol' Mistah Buzzard was the only one whom Peter was acquainted with who had a bald head. King Eagle is called bald-headed but isn't bald at all. On the other hand, Ol' Mistah Buzzard, who isn't a Buzzard at all, but a Vulture, hasn't a feather on his head. He told the story of how his family first became bald-headed and ever since then Peter had taken the liveliest interest in Ol' Mistah Buzzard[31].

31 STORY 136, 1912.

Illustrations. July 23 to July 28, 1917.

1699. A Surprise Party
No one but Spotty the Turtle could have any such looking baby as that.

1700. Jimmy Skunk is Strangely Interested
One behind another they scrambled along.

1701. Peter Rabbit is Full of Questions
"Spotty," he cried, "What were eight little turtles doing in a sandy spot upon the Green Meadows?"

1702. Spotty the Turtle Answers Peter's Questions
He turned to Mrs. Spotty.

1703. Grandfather Frog's Eyes
"Here comes old Whitetail!" cried Peter

1704. Eyes that Go Up and Down
"Has that robber gone?" asked Grandfather Frog.

This Spring, Ol' Mistah Buzzard had brought Mrs. Buzzard up from Ol' Virginny with him and Peter had spent many hours watching them sail round and round high up in the blue, blue sky, so high sometimes that they were little more than specks. This morning as he watched Ol' Mistah Buzzard it suddenly hopped into Peter's head that he hadn't seen Mrs. Buzzard for some time. Ol' Mistah Buzzard was alone now, and he had been alone every time Peter had seen him of late only he, Peter, hadn't happened to think of it before.

Peter paused and gazed up at Ol' Mistah Buzzard thoughtfully. "I wonder," said he, thinking aloud as he sometimes does, "If anything can have happened to Ol' Mrs. Buzzard, or if she has grown tired of the Green Forest and gone back to her old home?"

He wrinkled his forehead in a way he has when he is puzzled or trying to think. Then as a thought popped into his head his face cleared.

"I know!" he exclaimed. "It must be that Mrs. Buzzard is keeping house. Of course. Why didn't I think of that before. All my feathered friends, and some who are not my friends, have nests now, so why shouldn't Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard have a nest? They have. I feel it in my bones. They've got a nest somewhere and Mrs. Buzzard is taking care of the eggs and that is why I haven't seen her lately. Now I wonder where that nest is. I should like to see it. I believe I'll have a look around In the Green Forest. Such big folks as Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard must have a big nest and it ought not to be hard to find it."

Fairly bubbling over with curiosity Peter started to run again toward the Green Forest.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 5 "Peter Grows Curious about Ol' Mistah Buzzard")

STORY 1706. July 31, 1917

Peter Rabbit's Neck Hurts

Who blindly seeks will seldom find
The thing he has upon his mind.

If he does, it will be by accident. It will be pure luck. Peter Rabbit should have known this. He has tried it often enough. But Peter is a heedless, happy- go-lucky fellow, and I guess he always will be. So when he made up his mind that he would like to see the nest of Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard he promptly started to look for it without the least idea where to look or what to look for.

He thought he had an idea, but Peter always thinks he has an idea. The trouble is, he never thinks enough to know whether or not he has an idea. If Ol' Mistah Buzzard had a nest, of course it must be in the Green Forest, reasoned Peter. And because all the big birds of his acquaintance build big nests high up in the trees, of course Ol' Mistah Buzzard must do the same thing. That was as far as Peter went in his thinking.

"All I need to do is to keep my eyes wide open for a new, big nest in a tall tree,

and that ought to be easy enough to find," thought Peter as he scampered into the Green Forest, lipperty-lipperty- lip.

Once in the Green Forest he no longer hurried. It is hard work to hurry with your head tipped back so as to see the tops of the trees. Presently Peter's neck began to ache. He sat down under a friendly little hemlock tree to rest his aching neck. When it felt better, he went on again, his head tipped back as before. Whenever he saw a bundle of sticks or leaves high up in a tree, he was sure that he had found Ol' Mistah Buzzard's nest. Then he would sit down and stare at it very hard and presently would discover that it was an old nest of Redtail the Hawk or of Blacky the Crow or of Chatterer the Red Squirrel or his cousin, Happy Jack Squirrel. Then he would work his head back and forth to get the kink out of his neck, sigh and start on again.

"My goodness, I didn't suppose there were so many old nests in the Green Forest," muttered Peter, as for the 20th time he was disappointed. "And what an everlasting lot of trees! Why the Green Forest is all trees!"

Then Peter looked ail around to see if anybody had overheard that foolish remark. Nobody had, and Peter grinned at his own foolishness. He rubbed his neck and started on, his head tipped back as before. At last, he could stand it no longer.

"I've got to give it up for now, anyway," said he ruefully. "My neck aches so that I can't stand it any longer." Of course, he meant the ache, not his neck. "I want awfully to find that nest of Ol' Mistah Buzzard's, but I guess I'll have to wait until another day. I didn't realize that the Green Forest was so big. Why, at this rate it will take me all the rest of the Summer and more, too, to look into every tree. If I only had some idea just what part of the Green Forest to look in it would help some.

Right then and there a sudden idea popped into his funny little head and he grinned sheepishly. "Why didn't I think of it before?" he said right out loud. "I'll just watch Ol' Mistah Buzzard and see where he goes when he comes down from up in the blue, blue sky. He'll be sure to come down near his nest and then all I'll have to do is to get right over there and find it. My gracious, goodness me, but my neck certainly does ache! I think I'll rest a bit and try my new plan later."

And Peter did this very thing.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 6, "Peter Rabbit's Neck Aches")

STORY 1707. August 1, 1917

The Result of Peter's Watching

The result of Peter Rabbit's fool search for the nest of Ol' Mistah Buzzard was a stiff and aching neck from tipping his head back so long in order to look up in the trees. The next day, however, the ache was gone, but his curiosity was not. It was greater than ever. So Peter scampered, lipperty-lipperty-lip, over to the edge of the Green Forest to try his new plan of watching Ol' Mistah Buzzard.

"It can't fail," thought Peter. "No, sir, it can't fail. All I have to do is to be patient.

Ol' Mistah Buzzard is bound to visit his nest and if I watch him, why, of course, I'll find out where that nest is. Anyway, I'll find the locality and then it will be easy enough to find the nest, because such a great big fellow as Ol' Mistah Buzzard must have a great big nest, and a great big nest cannot very well be hidden."

So Peter made himself comfortable in a little tangle of briars on the edge of the Green Forest, where he could look up in the blue, blue sky and watch Ol' Mistah Buzzard sailing round and round. Now, as everybody knows, Ol' Mistah Buzzard spends much of his time doing this very thing. He will sail about for hours because for him it is just about as easy as sitting still, and at the same time it gives him a chance to see all that is going on below, for Ol' Mistah Buzzard's eyes are very, very keen, At first it was easy for Peter to sit there and do nothing but watch Ol' Mistah Buzzard, for Peter is very fond of sitting still and doing nothing. Watching Ol' Mistah Buzzard really amounted to doing nothing.

But after a while, Peter found that staring up in the sky that way made him sleepy. In spite of all he could do, his eyelids would close for a minute or two at a time. Then they would fly open and he would look up hastily to find Ol' Mistah Buzzard still a speck high up in the blue, blue sky. More and more often Peter's eyes closed for tiny naps and, though he didn't know it, those naps grew longer and longer. At last his eyes flew open to see nothing but the blue, blue sky and a few fleecy white clouds. Of Ol' Mistah Buzzard there was no sign.

Peter rubbed his eyes and looked again this way and that way, but it was all too evident at Ol' Mistah Buzzard was no longer sailing round and round high up in the blue, blue sky. He had come down while Peter was taking a nap. Peter almost cried with vexation. But there was no one to blame but himself. He knew that. If he had kept his eyes open, he would have seen Ol' Mistah Buzzard come down. But he hadn't and so he was no wiser than before.

Peter called himself names. Yes, sir, he did just that very thing. He was so provoked with himself that he actually called himself names. "Anyway it is quite useless to sit here any longer," he concluded. "I'll have to try again later in the day or tomorrow."

So Peter started for home in the dear old Brier Patch. Halfway there he glanced up from force of habit. Up in the blue, blue sky someone was swinging round and round in great circles. Peter stopped short and stared. Then he grinned. It was Ol' Mrs. Buzzard this time. She must have come out of the Green Forest while Peter was on his way home. If he had sat still a little longer, he would have seen her rise into the air and would have known just where she had come from. Peter turned and scurried back to his hiding place.

"This time I won't go to sleep!" he declared. "I'll keep my eyes on Ol' Mrs. Buzzard if I have to stick brambles into me to keep awake. I have an idea that she won't stay up as long as Ol' Mistah Buzzard, anyway."

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 7)

STORY 1708. August 2, 1917

Peter Rabbit is Jubilant

To be jubilant is to be filled with joy and gladness. This is exactly Peter Rabbit's condition. He was so jubilant that he had to kick up his heels half a dozen times. You see, Ol' Mrs. Buzzard had stayed up in the air only a very short time. In fact, Peter had been in his hiding place on the edge of the Green Forest only a very short time when she came down from high up in the blue, blue sky. He hadn't had time to get sleepy this time.

Down, down, down she came and disappeared among the treetops. But Peter had seen just where she had disappeared. It was very near a certain tall pine tree. He knew that he could go straight to that certain tall pine tree without any trouble. And once there he had no doubt at all that he would find that nest. A nest big enough for such a big bird as Ol' Mrs. Buzzard surely couldn't be hidden so that he couldn't find it.

So Peter was jubilant and hopped and skipped happily on his way toward that certain tall pine tree. Forgotten was his stiff neck of the day before. Forgotten was his disappointment that very morning when Ol' Mistah Buzzard, whom he had been watching, had come down out of the blue, blue sky while he, Peter, was napping. His curiosity was about to be satisfied. He was about to find the nest of Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard. Not a single doubt entered his foolish little head. In fact, he counted that nest as good as found already.

So he hopped and he skipped and he skipped and he hopped on his way to the certain tall pine tree, and all the way he thought what a smart chap he was.

"Of course," said Peter to himself, "Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard think their nest is a secret that no one will find out, and yet they give that secret away to any one as smart as I am. I don't suppose it ever has entered their heads that anyone would watch them. And, of course, when I have found that nest, I won't tell anybody about it, because that wouldn't be fair."

It didn't enter Peter's head that he himself wasn't fair in spying and trying to find that nest. Of course, it was no business of his, certainly not. But Peter didn't once think of this. Curiosity had taken possession of him, and when curiosity takes possession of anybody, he is likely to give little heed to right and wrong.

So, all in good time, Peter came to the certain tall pine tree, near which he had seen Ol' Mrs. Buzzard disappear among the treetops. First, he looked that over carefully, though he didn't expect to find the nest in it because it was such a conspicuous tree. Con-spic-u-ous means to stand out from surrounding things so as to be easily seen. Peter didn't think that Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard would build their nest in a tree that would be so easily and quickly picked out from among the other trees, but he looked it over carefully to make sure. While he was doing this a voice startled him.

"Good morning, Brer Rabbit. Yo' seem to be looking fo' something. Can Ah help yo' find it?" said the voice.

Peter whirled about to find Ol' Mistah Buzzard looking down at him from the top of a tall, dead tree, which is a favorite roost of his, and in his eyes was a twinkle. Peter was confused. Yes, sir, Peter was very much confused. He didn't know just what to say.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 8)

STORY 1709. August 3, 1917

Peter Tells the Truth

Remember this: 'Tis always well
The truth and nothing else to tell.

Peter Rabbit didn't know what to say when Ol' Mistah Buzzard asked him what he was looking for and if he, Or Mistah Buzzard, could help find it. No, sir, Peter didn't know what to say. He was quite confused. In the first place, he had forgotten that Ol' Mistah Buzzard's favorite roost was a tall, dead tree close by, and he hadn't seen Ol' Mistah Buzzard until the latter spoke. This had startled him, but what had confused him still more was the fact that he didn't quite see how he could answer Ol' Mistah Buzzard's questions.

However, Peter is truthful. He has found that not only is it wrong to tell an untruth, but in the end it never pays. So now he blurted out the truth.

"I—I—I," he stammered and stopped. Ol' Mistah Buzzard's eyes twinkled, but he said nothing, and in a minute Peter began again. "I was just sort of wondering if you and Mrs. Buzzard have nest up in that tall pine tree," said he.

Then Ah'll just save yo' the trouble of wondering any mo'," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard, his eyes twinkling more than ever. We haven't. What is mo', we wouldn't dream of building a nest in a tree like that—a tree that is so much taller and bigger than the rest that all who come this way are just naturally bound to look at it. May Ah ask, Brer Rabbit, what fo' yo' seem so interested in mah nest?"

Peter hung his head. Of course, there was no reason except idle curiosity and he was ashamed to admit that. But he did. Yes, sir, he did. He is too truthful not to admit his own faults.

"I just thought I would like to see it, Mistah Buzzard," he replied. "It just popped into my head the other day that probably you and Mrs. Buzzard have a nest and I got to wondering what it is like. I've seen the nests of Blacky the Crow and Redtail the Hawk and Hooty the Owl and of a good many others and I got to wondering if you build a nest anything like those I have seen. So being over this way, I thought I would just call around."

"Ah see," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard. "May Ah ask yo' Brer Rabbit, how it happened that yo' thought that mah nest might be over here"

"Why, I saw Ol' Mrs. Buzzard disappear among the tree-tops right near here," said Peter eagerly.

"Which Ah take it means that yo were watching her to see where she went," returned Ol' Mistah Buzzard dryly.

"Y-e-s." confessed Peter, who looked very much ashamed of himself. You see, he knew then that Ol' Mistah Buzzard knew that he had been spying, and spying is something that nobody likes.

"But yo' didn't see just where she did go, did you?" continued Ol' Mistah Buzzard.

"No," replied Peter. "I thought that if I knew somewhere near the spot where your nest is I could find it. Such big folks as you and Mrs. Buzzard must have a big nest. You do, don't, you, Mr. Buzzard?"

"Hm-m-m, Ah don' see it anywhere," said Ol' Mistah Buzzard, looking this way and that. All the time his eyes twinkled more than ever. "What makes yo' so sure Ah have got a nest, Brer Rabbit?"

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 9)

STORY 1710. August 4, 1917

Ol' Mistah Buzzard Teases Peter Rabbit

Ol' Mistah Buzzard looked down at Peter Rabbit and chuckled as he waited for Peter's reply to his question. You know he had asked why Peter was so sure that he, Ol' Mistah Buzzard, had a nest. It was a noiseless chuckle and so, of course, Peter didn't hear it. Peter scratched his long left ear with his long right hind foot. Then he scratched his long right ear with his long left hind foot. Finally he made reply.

"Of course, I don't know for sure that you have a nest," said he, "but I think you must have. All the birds I know have nests this time of year. Besides, this year you brought Mrs. Buzzard up from the South with you and I've noticed that lately I haven't seen her very often. She doesn't sail round and round way up in the blue, blue sky with you the way she did when she first arrived. So I think she must be taking care of her eggs. And if you have eggs to be taken care of, why, of course, you must have a nest. I—I wish you would tell me where it is, Mistah Buzzard. I'd just love to see it and I will promise not to tell a single living soul where it is."

Peter was very much in earnest. "Not even Mrs. Peter?" asked Ol' Mistah Buzzard.

Peter hesitated. You know he usually tells Mrs. Peter everything. He doesn't believe in keeping secrets from Mrs. Peter. But this was different from most secrets, and he did so want to see that nest. So at last, he agreed that he wouldn't tell anybody, not even Mrs. Peter.

Ol' Mistah Buzzard leaned down with a great pretense of secrecy. "Ah'm going to tell yo' something, Brer Rabbit," said he, and Peter's long ears stood straight up expectantly. "Ah haven't any nest. No, sah; Ah haven't any nest," he concluded.

Peter looked the disappointment he felt. He had been so sure that now he was to find out what he wanted to know. "But—but what is the reason that Mrs. Buzzard keeps

out of sight so much?" he asked.

"That," whispered Ol' Mistah Buzzard, as if afraid he might be overheard, "is the real secret. She is so busy with household cares that she hasn't time for anything else."

"But—but—but, why I thought you just said that you haven't any nest?" stammered Peter, looking quite as puzzled as he felt. In fact, he looked so puzzled that Ol' Mistah Buzzard had to turn away his head to hide a grin.

"That is just what Ah did say," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard. "That is just what Ah did say. We haven't any nest."

"Then how can Mrs. Buzzard be so busy with household cares?" demanded Peter. His voice was just a little sharp. He was beginning to suspect that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was trying to have fun at his expense.

"She is sitting on our two eggs and one of these days Ah reckons we-uns are going to have two of the finest babies in the Green Forest," asserted OI' Mistah Buzzard.

"But you just said you haven't any nest!" exclaimed Peter.

"So Ah did! Ah did!" replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard. "Certainly, Ah did. We-uns haven't any nest."

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 10)

STORY 1711. August 6, 1917.

Peter is Both Puzzled and Curious

"Mistah Buzzard, you are making fun of me! That's what you are doing—making fun of me!" exclaimed Peter Rabbit indignantly.

"A'm doing nothing of the kind, Brer Rabbit," declared Ol' Mistah Buzzard. "What fo' do you say that?" He looked very solemn, though if the truth were known he was having hard work to keep a twinkle of mischief from showing in his eyes.

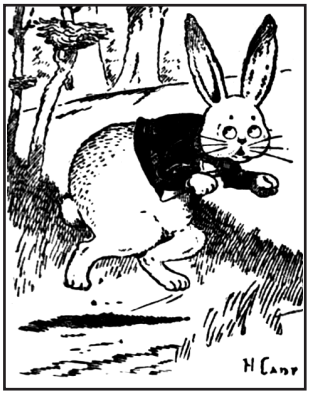
"Because," replied Peter in a tone that showed that he felt hurt and decidedly put out, "you tell me that you and Mrs. Buzzard haven't any nest and then you tell me that Mrs. Buzzard is so busy with household cares that she hasn't time to fly in the blue, blue sky as she did when she first arrived. You tell me that you haven't any nest and then you tell me that you have two eggs. Your story doesn't hang together. It doesn't hang together at all. No, sir, it doesn't hang together at all. If you have got two eggs of course you have got a nest. If you haven't got a nest, why how can you have two eggs? Tell me that! I can believe one half your story, but only half. Do you know which half I believe?"

Ol' Mistah Buzzard turned his head as if to look off over the Green Forest, but really to hide a grin. When he looked down at Peter again, he appeared to be indignant in his turn.

"Ah'm not used to having mah word doubted, Brer Rabbit," said he with dignity.

Illustrations. July 30 to August 4, 1917.

1705. Peter Grows Curious about Ol' Mr. Buzzard
Peter gazed up at Ol' Mistah Buzzard thoughtfully



1706. Peter Rabbit's Neck Hurts
"My goodness! I didn't suppose there were so many old nests in the Green Forest," muttered Peter.

1707. The Result of Peter's Watching
"This time I won't go to sleep," he declared.

1708. Peter Rabbit is Jubilant
"Good Morning, Brer Rabbit. Yo' seem to be looking for something."

1709. Peter Tells the Truth
"May Ah ask what fo' yo' seem so interested in mah nest?"

1710. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Teases Peter Rabbit
"But you just said you haven't any nest!" exclaimed Peter.

“Ah always have had a most friendly feeling fo’ yo’, Brer Rabbit, but Ah reckons Ah don’t want anything mo’ to do with one who tells me to mah face that he doesn’t believe what Ah say. No, sah, Ah reckons Ah don’ want anything mo’ to do with any such person as that.”

Or Mistah Buzzard shifted his position awkwardly and turned his back on Peter Rabbit.

Peter didn’t know what to do. He and Ol’ Mistah Buzzard had been the best of friends, and he didn’t want that friendship to end. He had been quite honest in saying that he didn’t believe that story. He didn’t believe it because he couldn’t believe it. At least he didn’t see how he could. But now that Ol’ Mistah Buzzard seemed to be offended a little doubt crept into Peter’s head. He had lived long enough to know that there are some things very hard to believe which are true nevertheless.

For some time he sat staring at Ol’ Mistah Buzzard’s back and while he stared he did a lot of thinking. Finally he decided that Ol’ Mistah Buzzard’s friendship was worth a great deal more than satisfying his own idle curiosity.

“Mistah Buzzard,” said he in a timid small voice, “of course if you say on your honor that you are not joking with me and that you really have two eggs and no nest I’ll believe you. I wouldn’t for the world have you think that I doubt your word of honor. I wouldn’t think of doing such a thing. You see I never heard of such a thing as anybody having eggs and no place to put them and so of course I thought you were joking. I’m sorry if I’ve offended you. Won’t you tell me where those eggs are?”

O’ Mistah Buzzard kept still so long that Peter feared that after all he was too much offended to make up. But at last he turned and looked down at Peter.

“Brer Rabbit,” said he, “Ah accept your apology. Ah have seen so many things hard to believe myself that Ah know how yo’ feel. What Ah told yo’ is true on mah honor. We-uns haven’t any nest, but Mrs. Buzzard and Ah done got two as fine eggs as ever yo’ have seen. Where they are is the secret of we-uns. All Ah can tell yo’ is that they are here or hereabouts. Ah reckon that now Ah’ll stretch mah wings a bit.”

With this Ol’ Mistah Buzzard spread his great wings, flapped them a few times, and then sailed up, up, up in the blue, blue sky, leaving Peter more puzzled and curious than ever.

(*The Adventures of Ol’ Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 11)

STORY 1712. August 7, 1917.

Peter Consults Sammy Jay

Peter Rabbit stared up in the blue, blue sky watching Ol’ Mistah Buzzard sail round and round as only Ol’ Mistah Buzzard can. Peter sighed. It was clear to him that he had learned all that he could learn from Ol’ Mistah Buzzard about those eggs which the latter said Ol’ Mrs. Buzzard was caring for.

“He said that they are here or hereabouts and yet not in a nest,” said Peter to himself. “What he means by that is too much for me. If they are here I ought to be able to find them. At least I ought to be able to find Mrs. Buzzard, and, of course, if I find her, I will find those eggs. It seems simple enough.”

Peter looked this way and that way, but mostly up in the trees. Somehow he couldn’t, he just couldn’t believe that Mrs. Buzzard could be anywhere else. But for all his looking he found nothing and at last gave up. The puzzle was too much for him. He was just about to start for his home in the dear Old Briar Patch when he heard the voice of Sammy Jay not far off.

“What I can’t find perhaps Sammy can,” thought Peter. “There are mighty few things Sammy Jay can’t find out if he sets out to. Perhaps he knows all about those eggs of Ol’ Mistah Buzzard’s now. Anyway it won’t do any harm to ask him.”

So off Peter started to look for Sammy Jay. It didn’t take him long to find Sammy, for the latter’s blue coat is easy to see when he is flying about. “Sammy Jay,” began Peter as soon as he was near enough, “did you ever hear of anybody having eggs and no nest to put them in?”

“Certainly,” replied Sammy promptly.

“Who?” demanded Peter eagerly.

“Boomer the Nighthawk for one,” replied Sammy.

“What?” cried Peter as if he hadn’t understood or at least as if he thought he hadn’t understood. There was astonishment in the very tone of his voice.

“Doesn’t Boomer have a nest? If he doesn’t, where does Mrs. Boomer lay her eggs?”

“Where would she lay them, Mr. Curiosity?” retorted Sammy. “She lays them on the ground on a flat rock. Mrs. Whip-poor-will does the same thing. I supposed everybody know that. Where have you been—asleep?”

“No,” retorted Peter shortly, for it rather upset him to learn that he hadn’t known these facts about two of his familiar friends. “But I’m not interested in Boomer and Whip-poor-will just now. It is someone else I want to know about.

“All right,” replied Sammy. “What have you got on your mind? The sooner you get it off the better. You are looking too excited, Peter. You know too much excitement is bad for your health.”

Sammy Jay was teasing and Peter knew it. He made up a face at Sammy, a good-natured face, you know. Then he laughed as he replied:

“Sammy Jay, tell me true, do you know where Mrs. Buzzard lays her eggs?”

Sammy scratched his topknot thoughtfully. “I can’t say that I do,” he replied. Then noticing how disappointed Peter looked, he hastened to add: “But I guess I can find out if I want to. Why do you want to know?”

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 12)

STORY 1713. August 8, 1917.

Peter Arouses Sammy Jay's Interest

When Sammy Jay asked Peter Rabbit why he was so anxious to know about where Ol' Mrs. Buzzard had laid her eggs, Peter hesitated. Then he blurted out the whole story. He told Sammy how it had popped into his head that he never had seen the nest of Ol' Mistah Buzzard and Mrs. Buzzard, of how he had made up his mind that of course they must have a nest, of how he had thought that such big people must have a big nest, of how he had looked for it until his neck ached, of how he had watched Ol' Mrs. Buzzard and finally of how Ol' Mistah Buzzard had told him that they hadn't a nest but that they had two eggs.

"If they have got two eggs, where are they? I ask you that, Sammy Jay?" concluded Peter.

Sammy had listened with growing interest. It so happens that he never had given a thought to the affairs of Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard, which was rather odd, as Sammy is usually interested in the affairs of everybody in his neighborhood. He scratched his topknot thoughtfully.

"I shall have to look into this," said he at last, winking at Peter. "If Ol' Mistah Buzzard told you on his word of honor that he hasn't a nest, why he hasn't and that is all there is to that. If he hasn't a nest and yet Mrs. Buzzard is sitting on two eggs, why those two eggs must be somewhere."

Peter nodded sagely. "Of course," said he.

"And if others who have no nests lay their eggs on the ground, why shouldn't Mrs. Buzzard?" continued Sammy. "Why shouldn't she do as Mrs. Boomer the Nighthawk and Mrs. Whip-poor-will do?"

"True enough," said Peter gravely. "True enough. Why shouldn't she? I hadn't thought of that, because you see I didn't know about Mrs. Boomer and Mrs. Whip-poor-will until you told me. Of course, those eggs must be on the ground. The question is, where? I haven't seen Ol' Mrs. Buzzard anywhere on the ground. I wish I had thought of the ground before. If I had it would have saved my neck. Funny, isn't it, that anyone so fond of the air and flying so high should lay eggs on the ground?"

"We don't know yet that they are on the ground," Sammy Jay broke in. "You are jumping at things just as usual. Peter Rabbit. Now I am going to see what I can find out. If my eyes are not sharp enough to find any one as big as Mrs. Buzzard I shall think there is something the matter with them." Sammy spread his wings ready to fly.

If you find out where those eggs are you'll come back and tell me, won't you Sammy?" he asked anxiously.

"Perhaps," replied Sammy Jay with a grin.

"O, but you must!" cried Peter. "You wouldn't have known anything about them If I hadn't told you."

"I don't know anything about them now," retorted Sammy. "That is why I am going to look for them."

"But please, Sammy, come back and tell me if you find them," begged Peter. I'll wait right here."

"Perhaps," replied Sammy provokingly, and flew away.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 13)

STORY 1714. August 9, 1917.

Sammy Jay Disappoints Peter

When once you've got your mind all set
  Upon some special thing
How dreadful disappointing 'tis
  To have your hopes take wing.

Somehow Peter Rabbit felt it in his bones that Sammy Jay would find out what he, Peter, hadn't been able to find out for all his trying—Ol' Mistah Buzzard's secret. Perhaps it was because Sammy is a famous hand at finding out the secrets of others. Perhaps it was because Peter has tried in vain to keep secrets of his own from Sammy. Anyway, as he waited there in the Green Forest for Sammy to return, it was with a feeling that when he did come back, he surely would have the secret about the eggs of Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard.

It was a long time before he saw or heard anything of Sammy, but at last he heard his harsh voice in the distance and presently caught sight of his blue coat among the trees. Peter fairly danced with impatience. He just could not sit still. It seemed to him as if Sammy was taking an unusually long time. He stopped in almost every tree. Finally Peter ran to meet him.

"Well, did you find those eggs?" cried Peter as soon as he was near enough.

Sammy Jay looked very much dejected and disappointed. "No," said he, "I didn't find those eggs."

Peter looked at Sammy Jay sharply to make sure that he was telling the truth, for sometimes, I am sorry to say, Sammy doesn't tell the truth. But this time Sammy looked so honest that Peter didn't doubt him. He tried not to let his disappointment show, but he could not help it. "I—I thought surely you'd find them," said he. "I guess if you couldn't nobody can."

That pleased Sammy Jay and he flew down a little nearer to Peter. "I'm going to tell you something, Peter," said he. "I didn't find those eggs because there aren't any."

"What?" cried Peter jumping right up in the air.

"It's a fact," replied Sammy. "Ol' Mistah Buzzard and Mrs. Buzzard haven't any eggs. I know it."

"How do you know it?" demanded Peter. "Ol' Mistah Buzzard told me on his honor that they had two."

"And Ol' Mrs. Buzzard told me on her honor that they haven't any," replied Sammy. "What is more, I believe her."

Peter stared at Sammy Jay with such a funny look on his face that Sammy had to turn his head to hide a smile.

"So you found Mrs. Buzzard," said Peter when he could find his voice. "Did she tell you that they haven't any nest?"

"I didn't ask her," replied Sammy. "All I asked her about was the eggs, and, as I have already told you, they haven't any."

"How do you know that she told the truth?" asked Peter, suspiciously.

"I know because I know," retorted Sammy, which wasn't much of an answer.

"Well," said Peter at last, "I think I'll give up and go home to the dear old Briar Patch. Of course those eggs were no business of mine, anyway. It's funny to me, though, that Ol' Mistah Buzzard should tell me that they have two and Mrs. Buzzard should tell you that they haven't any. I don't understand it at all."

"By the way, Peter," said Sammy as Peter started for home, "I saw something which will interest you and perhaps make up for your disappointment."

Peter pricked up his ears hopefully. "What was it?" he demanded.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 14)

STORY 1715. August 10, 1917.

Sammy Jay Gives Peter Directions

Peter Rabbit was all curiosity as he demanded what it was that Sammy Jay had found that would be of interest to him. Of course, Sammy had known that he would be. It doesn't take much to arouse Peter's curiosity. Some people are just that way. A word or two is enough to get them all worked up. Sammy cocked his head to one side and looked at Peter shrewdly.

"Do you think that you can follow my directions exactly?" he asked.

Peter nodded his head vigorously. "Of course," he replied. "Just give them to me and see. But what is it you saw and that you think will interest me? It might not, you know."

"I don't know anything of the sort," replied Sammy. "On the contrary I know that it will interest you. It interested me a great deal and anything that will interest me is bound to interest you. But I'm not going to tell you what it is. I'm going to let you

have the fun of finding it. If when you find it, you don't say that it is one of the most surprising things you have seen in all your life, my name isn't Sammy Jay."

By this time Peter was all ears, as the saying is. He had forgotten all about his disappointment over not finding the secret of Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard. He was impatient to be off in quest of this mysterious and interesting thing that Sammy Jay had found.

"All right. Sammy, I'll wait to find out for myself what it is," said he. "It is fun sometimes not to know just what it is you are looking for. Where did you say this thing is?"

"I didn't say," replied Sammy, his sharp eyes twinkling with mischief. "First you must promise to do exactly as I say."

"I promise," declared Peter with great promptness.

"Very good," said Sammy. "The first thing to do is to go over to that dead tree where you saw Ol' Mistah Buzzard this morning. You know where that is, don't you?"

"Of course, I know where that is," retorted Peter.

"When you get there turn to your right until you come to a little thicket of young hemlock trees," continued Sammy. "Back of that thicket is a great big hollow log."

"I know all about that log," Peter interrupted "I've hidden in it more than once. What next?"

"When you reach that log you must be very quiet," replied Sammy. "You must steal along beside it to the open end without making a sound. You mustn't rustle so much as a leaf."

"My, this sounds exciting," cried Peter. "What then?"

"Poke your head around and look inside. You'll see what it is that I found," replied Sammy.

A sudden suspicion crept into Peter's head. "There isn't anything there that is likely to hurt me, is there?" he demanded. "Reddy Fox isn't asleep in there, or anything like that?"

"No," replied Sammy Jay. "There isn't anybody or anything there to hurt you, but there is something there to interest you."

Sammy looked so earnest that Peter's suspicion left him at once. In fact he was a little ashamed of having been suspicious.

"All right," said he, "I'm off." And away he went, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 15)

STORY 1716. August 11, 1917.

Peter Jumps Almost Out of His Skin

Peter Rabbit's curiosity was so aroused by what Sammy Jay had told him that he scampered through very fast indeed. Lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip, scampered Peter, and didn't once look behind. If he had he might have seen Sammy Jay following, though it is doubtful, for Sammy was taking great care to keep out of sight.

But Peter didn't look behind. His thoughts were all on that mysterious and interesting thing that he was to find in the big hollow log behind the thicket of young hemlock trees. When he reached the tall dead tree on which Ol' Mistah Buzzard delights to sit he glanced up. Ol' Mistah Buzzard wasn't there and Peter kept on without a pause. Presently he came to the thicket of young hemlock trees and slipped through this without a pause.

Right on the other side lay the great hollow log. As soon as he reached this Peter stopped running. Mindful of what Sammy Jay had said he crept forward on tip-toe, as it were, taking the greatest care not to make a sound. He even held his breath. He put his feet down with the greatest care so as not to snap a single dry twig or rustle a single dry leaf. It was very exciting. It was the most exciting thing Peter had done for a long time. Every step or two he started to listen. Not a sound was to be heard, not even the sighing of the pine trees, for there wasn't even one of the Merry Little Breezes about to make them sigh. It was a lonely spot, a very lonely spot. The very silence made the mystery all the greater.

Little by little Peter crept along beside the great hollow log. It was one of the biggest logs in all the Green Forest. On many a stormy Winter night it had sheltered him. He knew all about that old log inside and out. At least he thought he did. Now as he reached the end of it, he stopped. He was eager to peep around and look inside and yet somehow he dreaded to. Just why he didn't know. Probably it was because Sammy Jay had made such a mystery of what was inside. You know how all of us are apt to be a little afraid of things that are mysterious.

Half a dozen times Peter started to peep around and each time drew back. At last he mustered up his courage. His curiosity overcame all his fears. Sammy Jay had said that there was nothing in there to harm him, and if that was the case it was foolish to be so timid. So Peter poked his head around the end of the old log, his eyes very big with wonder and anticipation. Before he could really see what was inside there came a sharp, angry hiss almost in his very face. It was one of the loudest hisses Peter ever had heard.

Poor Peter! He was so frightened that he jumped nearly out of his skin. In fact, he turned two back somersets, and then, without waiting to see who had frightened him so away he went, lipperty-lipperty-lip, until he was quite out of breath. Then a sound reached him that made him pause. It was very like the voice of Sammy Jay laughing.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 16)

STORY 1717. August 13, 1917

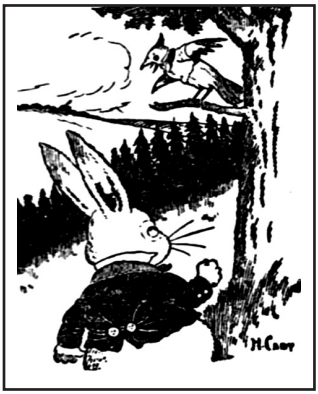
The Mystery is Cleared Up

Illustrations. August 6 to August 11, 1917.

1711. Peter is Both Puzzled and Curious
"Mr. Buzzard, you are making fun of me."

1712. Peter Consults Sammy Jay
"Sammy Jay, tell me true. Do you know where Mrs. Buzzard lays her eggs?"

1713. Peter Arouses Sammy Jay's Interest
"Perhaps," replied Sammy, provokingly, and flew away.



1714. Sammy Jay Disappoints Peter
"Well, did you find those eggs?" cried Peter.

1715. Sammy Jay Gives Peter Directions
"My, this sounds exciting," cried Peter.

1716. Peter Jumps Almost Out of His Skin
Poor Peter! He was so frightened that he almost jumped out of his skin.

At the sound of Sammy Jay's voice, Peter Rabbit stopped running. In fact, he stopped altogether. He sat up and listened. Yes, there was no doubt about it that it was the voice of Sammy Jay and it came from right near that great hollow log where Peter had just received such a fright. Moreover, Sammy was chuckling as if at a great joke. Peter looked back and in his eyes a suspicion grew and grew.

"Sammy Jay knew I was going to get that fright and he followed me to see what would happen. He played a joke on me, that's what he did!" declared Peter indignantly.

"But who was it in that old log that could hiss like that? That's what I want to know. Sammy told me that nothing would harm me, and somehow, I believe him. I suppose I'm foolish, too, after such a trick, but just the same I don't believe Sammy would send me into real danger. I don't know anyone who could hiss like that except one of the Snake family, and I'm too big for any of them to hurt me excepting Buzztail the Rattler or Copperhead, and somehow I don't believe it was either of them. I think I'll go back and find out who it was."

So Peter turned back and very, very carefully he approached the great hollow log. He found a place where he could see the open end of the great hollow log and be unseen himself, for he was hidden in a clump of ferns. At first he couldn't make out anything, for it was dark inside that old log. Then little by little he made out a dim shape inside, but whose shape it was he couldn't for the life of him tell. Presently he discovered Sammy Jay in a tree just above the old log. After a little the dim shape in the hollow log moved and then out came—can you guess who? The very last person in the world Peter Rabbit expected to see—Ol' Mrs. Buzzard!

Yes, sir, it was Ol' Mrs. Buzzard who walked out of the end of that hollow log, and when he saw her, Peter was just as much surprised as when that terrible hiss had frightened him. He couldn't possibly have been any more surprised. Of course, he had nothing to fear from Ol' Mrs. Buzzard, so he promptly walked out of his hiding place.

"Was it you that hissed when I looked in the hollow log a few minutes ago?" he demanded,

"It certainly was," replied Mrs. Buzzard. "Yo' startled me so Ah didn't rightly know who you were, so I hissed. Mah goodness, but yo' cert'nly can run, Brer Rabbit!"

Peter grinned, but he let it pass, for his curiosity was all in what Mrs. Buzzard was doing in that old log. "If you please, Mrs. Buzzard, what were you doing in that old log?" he asked politely.

"That's mah home fo' awhile," replied Mrs. Buzzard proudly.

"What?" cried Peter, as if he didn't trust his own ears.

He hopped a few steps nearer and peeped in. Then his eyes grew wide with astonishment. There was no nest there, but there were two little white downy birds. "Why—why—why—" stammered Peter and then stopped.

Sammy Jay laughed right out. "You see, " said Sammy, "Ol' Mistah Buzzard told the truth when he said that they had no nest. Also he told the truth when he said that

they had two eggs. That is, he thought he told the truth. He didn't know that they had hatched. And Ol' Mrs. Buzzard told the truth I when she told me that they hadn't any eggs. And I told the truth when I said that there was something here to interest you and that wouldn't hurt you. So the great mystery is cleared up, and I hope your curiosity is satisfied, Peter Rabbit."

"It is," cried Peter, drawing a long breath.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 17)

STORY 1718. August 14, 1917

Ol' Mistah Buzzard Explains Things

When Peter Rabbit said his curiosity was satisfied, he really meant it. He had found out what he so wanted to know. He had found out where Mrs. Buzzard had laid her eggs. He had found out that it was true that Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard do not build a nest. He had found out that in this particular case, the eggs had been laid in a great hollow log. So for the time being his curiosity was satisfied.

He promised Ol' Mrs. Buzzard that he would keep her secret. He laughed with her and with Sammy Jay at the way he had been frightened when Ol' Mrs. Buzzard had hissed right in his face, and he bade them farewell and started for home in the dear old Briar Patch. Of course, he was full of the strange discovery about the ways of Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard and could think of nothing else.

"It certainly is queer that such big birds shouldn't have a nest," thought Peter as he sat chewing a leaf of sweet clover. "I never would have thought of looking in a hollow log for their home, never in the world. I wonder what they would do if there wasn't a hollow log big enough. Hollow logs like that one are not to be found everywhere."

This thought was enough to awaken Peter's ever ready curiosity once more. As he thought it over and wondered his curiosity grew. So the next day he scampered back to the Green Forest and headed straight for the tall dead tree where Ol' Mistah Buzzard delights to sit. Ol' Mistah Buzzard was there and his eyes twinkled as he saw Peter coming.

"I know your secret now, Mistah Buzzard," cried Peter as soon as he reached the foot of the tree.

"Then Ah hopes you'll keep it," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard gravely.

"I will," promised Peter. "But Mistah Buzzard, there is one thing more I want to know."

"Only one thing? Yo' surprise me, Brer Rabbit," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard.

Peter grinned, for he knew that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was joking him about his curiosity. "There is only one thing now," said he, "but there may be more things later."

Well," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard, "what is that one thing? Get it off your mind and perhaps I can help yo' out."

"It is this: What do you and Mrs. Buzzard do for a place for your eggs when there isn't a big hollow log handy?" Peter replied promptly.

"Why, that's simple, very simple, indeed, Brer Rabbit," said Ol' Mistah Buzzard. "Mrs. Buzzard just naturally lays her aiggs on top of a big stump if there happens to be one handy. If there isn't she just lays her aiggs on the ground. Yo' know, Brer Rabbit, the ground is always handy.

Ol' Mistah Buzzard looked down and grinned and Peter grinned back. "Do you mean that she doesn't put any grass or sticks or anything under them?" asked Peter.

Ol' Mistah Buzzard nodded. "Of course," said he, "she picks out a place where she reckons she isn't going to be disturbed. Ol' Mrs. Buzzard is a little bit peevish when she don' be sitting on her aiggs. She don' like to be disturbed. So she picks out a place where she can be quite by herself, lays her aiggs and then takes care of them until they hatch, and that is all there is to it."

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 18)

STORY 1719. August 15, 1917

Sammy Jay Speaks His Mind

The more Peter Rabbit thought it over, the stranger it seemed to him that such big people as Ol' Mistah Buzzard and Mrs. Buzzard should be content to have no nest. If he hadn't with his own eyes seen those two Buzzard babies in the great hollow log, and if he hadn't heard with his own ears Ol' Mistah Buzzard say that when there was no hollow log handy Mrs. Buzzard would lay her eggs on top of a stump, and when there was no stump handy she would lay them on the bare ground, he wouldn't, he was sure, have been able to believe that anything of the kind could be true.

There was no one with whom he could talk the matter over save Sammy Jay. You see Peter had promised not to give the Buzzard secret away and Sammy was the only one Peter knew of who also knew that secret. So the first chance he got Peter asked Sammy what he thought of the matter, and if he supposed there was any good reason why the Buzzards didn't build a nest.

"Shiftlessness!" replied Sammy scornfully. "Just plain shiftlessness. They are too lazy and shiftless to go to the trouble of building a nest, that's all. Ol' Mistah Buzzard is just naturally lazy, and Mrs. Buzzard is just like him. Have you ever seen Ol' Mistah Buzzard do a stroke of work since you've known him?"

Peter couldn't remember that he had and said so.

"Of course you haven't," asserted Sammy in the same scornful voice as before. "Of course you haven't. Why? Because he hasn't done any work. All he does is just sail round and round in the blue, blue sky or sit in the sun on that old dead tree. When he's sailing round and round he doesn't move his wings any more than he has to. He doesn't even catch his own food."

"I don't hold that against him," declared Peter promptly, thinking how he had to always be on the watch to escape Hooty the Owl and members of the Hawk family, "but now you mention the matter I wonder what he does eat. I hadn't thought of it before. Do you know what he does eat?"

"Yes," replied Sammy, "I know." There was both scorn and disgust in his voice this time. "He eats things that no one else would think of eating. He eats dead things, and he don't seem to care how long they have been dead. He is the most shiftless fellow I know of. You are rather shiftless yourself, Peter, but compared with Ol' Mistah Buzzard you are almost industrious. I can't understand how anyone can be so shiftless and lazy. It doesn't surprise me any to find out that he and Mrs. Buzzard don't build a nest. I guess I would have been more surprised to find that they did. I know a good many shiftless folks but none equal to Ol' Mistah Buzzard and Mrs. Buzzard. Sometimes I wonder if the reason they have bald heads is because they are too lazy to grow feathers on them."

Sammy grinned at his own joke and Peter laughed. "You certainly have got a mighty small opinion of the Buzzard family, Sammy," said he.

"I certainly have," retorted Sammy. "I may have faults, but laziness isn't one of them. The idea of great, big, able-bodied birds like Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard being content to have their eggs on the ground without so much as a stick or a straw under them! I call it a disgrace to the whole feathered tribe."

Sammy Jay flirted his tail, tossed his head, and then flew away, leaving Peter to think things over and, I suspect, with a lot less respect for Ol' Mistah Buzzard than he had had before.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 19)

STORY 1720. August 16, 1917

Peter Asks a Personal Question

To be too personal is impolite:
So watch your tongue and guide it right.

To ask personal questions means to ask questions about things which really concern only those whom you may happen to put them to. Personal matters are those which are the business of no one but the ones whom they immediately concern, and there is no greater rudeness or impoliteness than to ask about them out of idle curiosity. Peter Rabbit knows this. Anyway he should know it. He ought to have learned it by this time. But Peter's curiosity is forever leading him to do things which he shouldn't do.

The more Peter thought over what Sammy Jay had said about the laziness and shiftlessness of Ol' Mistah and Mrs. Buzzard the more he was inclined to think that Sammy must be right about the matter. It certainly seemed as if no me as big and strong as Ol' Mistah Buzzard would be content to do without a nest of some sort unless they were indeed very lazy and shiftless. Peter himself is not at all fond of work, you know,

and right down in his heart he had a little feeling of sympathy for Ol Mistah Buzzard in avoiding unnecessary work. But even Peter felt that it was quite unpardonable that Ol' Mistah Buzzard's children should have no nest at all. The more he thought about it the more it seemed impossible that anyone could be quite so shiftless as this. His respect for Ol' Mistah Buzzard had received a great shock. At last he made up his mind that he would find out if what Sammy Jay had said could be true.

So over to the Green Forest scampered Peter, lipperty-lipperty-lip, straight to the tall dead tree where Ol' Mistah Buzzard delights to sit when he was not sailing round and round high up in the blue, blue sky.

Ol' Mistah Buzzard was there holding his wings half spread for the air to blow through them and the sun to fall on them. His eyes twinkled as he saw Peter.

"Yo' seem to have something on your mind, Brer Rabbit. What is it this time?" said he.

Peter hesitated a minute as if a little ashamed. Then he blurted out what he had in his mind. "Are you really and truly shiftless, Mistah Buzzard?" he asked.

Ol' Mistah Buzzard closed his wings and blinked his eyes very rapidly as if he didn't quite know what to think.

"What's that, Brer Rabbit?" he demanded sharply. "Ah think Ah couldn't have understood yo'. What's that yo' said?"

"I asked if you are really and truly shiftless?" repeated Peter.

Ol Mistah Buzzard ruffled up all his feathers indignantly. "Ah reckons yo' done lost all your manners, Brer Rabbit," said he. "That's a mighty personal question. Who says Ah'm shiftless? Who says that? Ah want to know who says Ah'm shiftless?"

Ol' Mistah Buzzard looked so fierce that Peter began to be afraid of him and wished with all his might that he had held his tongue.

"I—" he began, and hesitated. Then he hurried on. "You know, Mistah Buzzard, you haven't any nest and—and I've heard it said that it is because you and Mrs. Buzzard are too lazy and shiftless to build one. I thought there might be some other reason, and so I came to you to find out," he finished lamely.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 20)

STORY 1721. August 17, 1917

Ol' Mistah Buzzard Starts a Story

Do you wonder that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was indignant when Peter Rabbit blurted out such a personal question? You remember Peter had asked him right out if it was true that he was shiftless. Then Peter had gone on to explain that he had heard that said and all because the Buzzards had no nest. At first Ol' Mistah Buzzard was tempted to speak his mind very plainly to Peter and tell him just what he thought of people who gossip about others and their personal affairs, but Peter looked so innocent of any

intention to meddle, and so truly puzzled, that Ol' Mistah Buzzard promptly recovered his good nature.

"Mah affairs are really no business of yours, Brer Rabbit, and Ah reckons yo' know it, but just to set your mind at rest, Ah'm going to tell yo' a story," said he.

At this Peter pricked up his ears and settled himself contentedly. He had heard Ol' Mistah Buzzard tell stories, and he knew that a story from him was bound to be interesting whether it was true or not.

"Ah'm not saying that this is the true reason why my family doesn't built nests," began Ol' Mistah Buzzard with a twinkle in his eyes, "but it is a story that done been handed down to we-uns from way back at the beginning of things when the world was young. It was in the days when Granny and Grandaddy Buzzard, the first of mah family, lived and everybody was learning or trying to learn how to live.

"Yo' see, in those days nobody knew Just what was best to do. Everybody was trying to work out fo' himself what was best and learning something every day. Of course everybody made mistakes, lots of them, Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard just like the rest, and it was because of one of these mistakes that they didn't have a nest like the rest of the birds.

"Yo' see, when the first nesting season came round and Ol' Mother Nature passed the word along fo' all the birds to prepare places fo' their eggs and young, there were 'most as many ideas as there was kinds of birds. Each pair had their own idea of what a nest should be made of and where it should be put and fo' awhile there was a right smart lot of confusion. Yes, sah, there was a right smart lot of confusion.

"Ol' Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard were naturally easy going. It was powerful warm down there where they lived, and Ah reckons it looks to them plumb foolish to do any mo' work than they had to. Ah knows it looks that way to me. Building nests was new to everybody and nobody knew the best way of going about it.

" 'Ah tell you what,' says Grandaddy Buzzard to Granny Buzzard, "we-uns don't know how to build a nest. Everybody else has got a different idea and Ah reckons we-uns haven't any idea at all. Ah don' see any sense in getting all heated up and tired out trying to do something when we-uns don' know what it is we want, so Ah reckons we-uns will just sit tight and watch our neighbors. When they have got their nests built, we-uns will just go around and see which one we like best and which is easiest to build and then we'll build one like it.' This suited Ol' Granny Buzzard and she wasn't a mite slow in saying so.

"Excuse me, Brer Rabbit. Here come Mrs. Buzzard and Ah reckons she wants to see me about something particular. If yo' will wait here Ah will finish mah story when Ah comes back."

With this off flew Ol' Mistah Buzzard, leaving Peter to wait as patiently as he could for the end of the story.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 21)

STORY 1722. August 18, 1917

Ol' Mistah Buzzard Finishes His Tale

It seemed to Peter Rabbit that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was gone a long time. You know how it is, when you are waiting for the end of a story when the storyteller has been called away. Really it was only a few minutes, but it seemed to Peter ages and ages.

"Let me see, where was Ah?" said Ol' Mistah Buzzard as soon as he had once more seated himself comfortably on the tall dead tree under which Peter sat.

"You had reached the place where Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard decided to wait to see how the other birds built their nests," prompted Peter.

"Just so. Just so," replied Ol' Mistah Buzzard. "Well, Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard just sat round and watched the other birds and said nothing and looked wise. Ah reckons there was a terrible time building those first nests, and when they were all done Ah reckons none of them was much as nests go now. There was a right smart lot of fussing and worrying and quarreling, but Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard kept out of it and when anyone asked them where they were building their nest and what they were making it of they simply looked wise and said nothing.

"Of course, all the bird folks tried to make a powerful secret of where their nests were, but sitting around just watching Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard found out where most of them were. They waited until the last of their neighbors had finished their nests, and then they just went around looking at each to see how it was made and what it was made of. They found all kinds of nests, some made of sticks, and some made of straw, and some made of mud, and some made of moss. Seemed like nary one of them just suited Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard. Anyway, they kept hoping that they would see one that would suit better, and so they kept a-looking and a-looking and a-looking. Granny Buzzard wanted her nest made out of something soft and comfortable and Grandaddy Buzzard wanted it made of something it wouldn't be much work to find and less work to put together.

"So they couldn't make up their minds and time went drifting along and drifting along and first thing they knew every last one of the other birds had a nest and eggs and here were Grandaddy and Granny Buzzard without even a place picked to build a nest. When Grandaddy Buzzard realized this, he scratched his haid and began to look worried. Granny Buzzard scratched her haid and looked mo' worried.

" ''Pears like to me we-uns haven't got time to build a nest,' said Grandaddy Buzzard at last.

" 'Ah was thinking that same thing,' replied Granny Buzzard. 'If we-uns stop to build a nest now, we-uns will be so late the season is going to be all over befo' we-uns know it. Ah reckons Ah ought to be sitting on those aiggs right now.'

" 'Ah reckons that's right,' replied Grandaddy Buzzard, 'but fo' the life of me, Ah don' see what we-uns can do about it.'

"Two or three days later Granny Buzzard called him to one side in a place where nobody is likely to come along and showed him two aiggs right on the ground. 'Ah reckons that is better than any nest,' said she. 'Nobody's going to look on the ground fo' aiggs, and if they do there's a powerful lot of ground to look over for two aiggs. The wind can't blow them out of a nest and when they hatch the babies can't fall and hurt themselves. Ah'm going to sit right here until they hatch. Ah reckons this nest building is all plumb foolishness anyway.'

" 'Ah reckons it is, too,' replied Granddaddy Buzzard, with a sigh of relief because he hadn't got to help build a nest.

"And ever since then the Buzzard family done get along without nests and have saved theirselves a powerful lot of work," concluded Ol' Mistah Buzzard.

And to this day Peter isn't sure whether the Buzzards are smart or just shiftless.

(*The Adventures of Ol' Mistah Buzzard*, Chapter 22)

STORY 1723[32]. August 20, 1917

Peter Thinks He Must Be Dreaming

Because you've never seen a thing
  Don't say it can't be so.
Stranger things than you have dreamed
  You'll find where e'er you go.

Lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip scampered Peter Rabbit through the Green Forest very early one spring morning. There was nothing in particular on his mind. And so, as is the way when there is nothing in particular on his mind, his eyes turned this way and that way looking for nothing in particular, but open to see all that might be seen. So it was that presently they took note of that which had he anything special on his mind they would not have seen at all. It was a place on the ground where the dead leaves had been pulled over that very morning.

Peter grinned. "Mrs. Grouse must have been scratching here this morning," thought he. "I wonder if she is anywhere around."

And then, because his eyes were seeing that morning as they were intended to see at all times, it suddenly came to Peter that Mrs. Grouse must have been a very industrious person indeed to have scratched over so much ground that morning. In fact, it looked as if Mrs. Grouse must have had not only Mr. Grouse, but all of her big family of the year before with her, and this couldn't be, because that big family was scattered and at this time of year no longer flocked together.

"That certainly is queer," muttered Peter as he stared at the scratching ground. "I don't understand it at all."

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32 The wild turkey story arc is a departure from strict chronological continuity, presumably happening during the spring and summer of the current year. It is not unheard of for wild turkeys to breed during the late summer.

Illustrations. August 13 to August 18, 1917.

1717. The Mystery is Cleared Up
The very last person in the world Peter expected to see.

1718. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Explains Things
"I know your secret now, Mistah Buzzard," cried Peter.

1719. Sammy Jay Speaks His Mind
"You certainly have got a mighty small opinion of the Buzzard family," said he.

1720. Peter Asks a Personal Question
"Are you really and truly shiftless, Mr. Buzzard?" he asked.

1721. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Starts a Story
"Ah tell you what," said Grandaddy Buzzard to Granny Buzzard.

1722. Ol' Mistah Buzzard Finishes His Tale
"Ah reckon that is better than any nest," said he.

Just then Peter saw the print of a foot in a little damp spot where the earth was soft. He caught his breath sharply and his eyes threatened to pop right out of his head. You have heard of people being pop-eyed with astonishment. Well that is exactly the way Peter looked then. That footprint was very like the footprint of Mrs. Grouse's only it was ever and ever so much bigger. It was so much bigger that Peter just couldn't believe that it was a real footprint. It seemed to him that if his eyes were not playing a trick on him he must be dreaming.

He looked around at the trees and leaves and other familiar things. They looked just as they should look. Then he looked at that footprint again and there it was just as he had seen it at first, unbelievably big. Up in the barn-yard of Farmer Brown he had seen the footprint of Brown's biggest rooster, but this was much, oh, very much bigger than that. It was even bigger than the footprint of Honker the Goose which he had seen in the mud on the edge of the pond of Paddy the Beaver, but it was not at all like Honker's because the latter showed the webs Honker has between his toes, while the marks of these toes showed that there was nothing between them.

It wasn't the track of Ol' Mistah Buzzard. It was bigger than his and it was different. Besides Peter was sure that Ol' Mistah Buzzard hadn't yet come up from Ol' Virginny to spend the Summer. So take it altogether Peter was completely at a loss.

"Of course someone made it. It couldn't have come there itself. And whoever made it did all this scratching about here," muttered Peter. "It's too much for me. Am I awake or am I dreaming?"

STORY 1724. August 21, 1917

Peter's Breath is Quite Taken Away

Peter Rabbit has been puzzled many times in his life, but never more than when he found in the Green Forest a place that looked as if many Grouse had been scratching there that very morning and in a bit of soft earth the print of a foot very like the footprint of his old friend, Mrs. Grouse, only many times bigger. That it was the footprint of a bird there wasn't the least doubt in Peter's mind when he had made quite sure that he was awake and not dreaming. But what manner of bird could it be that could make so big a track? Not even when he had found the tracks of Buster Bear had he been more astonished.

Hastily Peter looked this way and looked that way and looked the other way. He even looked up in the treetops and then studied as much of the blue, blue sky as he could see through the trees, looking for the stranger who had made that wonderful track. But he saw no one. With a very funny feeling inside Peter sat up and listened. It was very still there in the Green Forest and though he listened with all his ears, as the saying is, he heard nothing. He saw nothing and he heard nothing, save what he often had seen and heard before. Everything about him was familiar save that great footprint, but that was enough to make other things seem unreal.

Peter was quite upset when at last he started on. He had a feeling that almost

anything might happen any minute. So he wasn't altogether surprised when he heard a rustling of leaves. He stopped short, then crept under a little hemlock tree and peeped out where there was a little opening among the trees. Nearer and nearer came the rustling. Presently it stopped and Peter say a head thrust out from among some bushes, the strangest looking head he ever had seen. In the first place it was bare of feathers, thus reminding Peter very much of Ol' Mistah Buzzard. In the second place it was mostly very red, with some blue and white places and a queer red thing that hung over one side of his bill. And then, too, the skin was very rough—warty, Peter called it.

And the eyes! Peter never will forget how bright and keen they were, nor how sharply they looked this way and that way to make sure that the way was clear. Then out stepped the biggest bird Peter ever had seen, his long neck stretched high as he listened and looked for danger. Satisfied that all was safe he suddenly raised his feathers, drew in his head so that it rested against his humped up back, spread his tail like a great fan, dropped both wings so that the longest feathers touched the ground, and began to strut.

It was then that Peter altogether lost his breath from sheer astonishment. He had seen Mr. Grouse strut just that way and had laughed at him, although at the same time he had admired him. But he didn't laugh this time. Of course it was funny to see anyone appear to be so proud of himself, but Peter didn't think of that. The fact is Peter was too much lost in astonishment and admiration to think of anything else. The Jolly Little Sunbeams touched the feathers of the great bird and it seemed to Peter that never had he seen such colors. He had thought them just brown at first, but as their owner strutted this way and that those feathers seemed to change and to fairly glisten, now like copper, now bluish, now almost like gold.

"O!" gasped Peter, and, though he didn't mean to, he moved ever so little. Instantly the great bird stopped strutting and looked toward where Peter was hidden suspiciously.

STORY 1725. August 22, 1917

Peter Makes a New Acquaintance

Peter Rabbit was just plain scared. Yes, sir, he was just plain scared. He wouldn't have admitted it for the world, but it was a fact. In his surprise at seeing a stranger, the largest bird he ever had seen in all his life strutting in an open place just as Mr. Grouse struts, he had moved ever so little. But that little was enough to catch the quick ears of the stranger and now he was staring straight at the place where Peter was hiding and somehow, those eyes had such a sharp, keen look that they made Peter afraid.

This is no place for me," thought Peter. "I don't know who this fellow is and it may be that he is quite harmless, but I'm not going to take any chances."

With this Peter sprang out of his hiding place and started to run as only Peter can. All in an instant the stranger's look of suspicion vanished.

"Quit, quit," said he. "What are you in such a hurry for, Brer Rabbit? I don't see anything to run away from."

Now Peter didn't want to admit that he was running away from this stranger. Of course not. Besides he had been called Brer Rabbit. No one but Ol' Mistah Buzzard and Unc' Billy Possum and Mr. Mocker, the Mocking Bird, called him that, and they had come to the Green Forest from down South. It must be that this stranger had come from down there too. No one who called him Brer Rabbit would want to harm him. So Peter stopped and at a safe distance sat up.

"Who are you?" he demanded rather impolitely. But then you know he was still fearful.

"I'm Big Tom. At least that is what most folk call me," replied the other proudly. "I'm Big Tom Gobbler the Turkey."

"And did you come up here from way down South?" persisted Peter, staring round-eyed in the most impolite manner.

"Not from way down South," replied Big Tom, "though most of my relatives live down there now. I've heard, however, that they used to live up here a long time ago and that is why I'm here. If it was a good place for them to live it ought to be a good place for me to live. I rather like what I've seen of it so far. What do you call it here?"

"The Green Forest," replied Peter promptly. "But how ever did you get here?"

Big Tom rather hesitated. "I was brought here," said he slowly. "I was caught in a trap and, together with Mrs. Turkey, was nailed up in a sort of box and until that box was opened here in the Green Forest couldn't even stretch my legs. I never was so shamefully treated in my life. It was all the doings of those dreadful two-legged creatures called men. What they did it for I don't know, but I can tell you one thing and that is they'll never get another chance and that's as sure as my name is Big Tom. I rather like this place from what I have seen of it. I think we shall soon be at home here."

"Is Mrs. Turkey here with you?" asked Peter excitedly.

"She's somewhere about," replied Big Tom carelessly. "In fact, I was looking for her when I heard you."

"And you going to live here always?" asked Peter.

"We are thinking of settling here," replied Big Tom. "We will if it suits us."

STORY 1726. August 23, 1917

Big Tom Asks Questions

When you ask a question ask of him who knows;
Thus it is that knowledge swiftly, surely grows.

It isn't often that Peter Rabbit is asked questions. Usually it is the other way around and he does all the asking. So now when this stranger in the Green Forest, this biggest of all the feathered folk, Big Tom Gobbler, began to ask Peter questions it was very flattering and pleasing to Peter's pride. When Big Tom said that he and Mrs.

Gobbler were thinking of settling there, Peter hastened to tell him that they would be sure to like it.

"There isn't another such place as the Green Forest in all the Great World!" I declared Peter. "You'll like it. When you come to know it, you'll love it. Everybody does."

"Quit, quit, quit, may be, may be," retorted Big Tom. "That remains to be seen. It all depends on what kind of neighbors we will find here. Now who lives here or hereabouts?"

Peter scratched his head thoughtfully. "To begin with the biggest," said he, "there is Buster Bear."

"So Buster Bear lives here, does he?" exclaimed Big Tom. "We'll have to keep our eyes open for him. Still I'm not sorry to know that he lives here. If it is safe for him, it is safe for us. Who else is there?"

"Lightfoot the Deer," replied Peter promptly.

"Good!" said Big Tom, nodding approvingly. "We have nothing to fear from him. Who else?"

"Old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy," said Peter.

"Quit, quit, quit! Foxes are a nuisance and I hoped that we should find none here!" exclaimed Big Tom. "I must warn Mrs. Gobbler. However, we have had plenty of experience with that tribe and I guess we don't need to worry."

"And there's Old Man Coyote," continued Peter.

"Who?" demanded Big Tom, looking very much puzzled.

"Old Man Coyote," replied Peter. "He came here from the Far West. He was caught in a trap out there and then brought on here and kept in a cage by men. But he managed to get out and then he came here to live. His home is up in the Old Pasture and he hunts on the Green Meadows and in the Green Forest[33]."

"What does he look like, and how big is he?" inquired Big Tom anxiously.

"He looks something like Reddy Fox only he is bigger and gray instead of red," replied Peter.

"What does he eat?" asked Big Tom.

"Anybody he can catch," said Peter promptly. "The only reason he hasn't eaten me is that he hasn't been smart enough to catch me," Peter grinned.

"Perhaps he isn't very smart," said Big Tom, not thinking how that might sound after what Peter had just said.

"Don't fool yourself. Don't fool yourself in any such way as that," retorted Peter. "He's smarter than old Granny Fox and Reddy Fox together, so take my advice and

33 STORY 848, 1914.

watch out!"

"Phew!" exclaimed Big Tom beginning to look anxious. "I don't know about staying here. Neighbors of that kind don't sound good to me." He looked this way and that way nervously as if he expected to see Old Man Coyote spring out from behind a tree any minute.

STORY 1727. August 24, 1917

Peter Calms Big Tom

Then Peter Rabbit told Big Tom Gobbler, who with Mrs. Gobbler had just come to the Green Forest, about Old Man Coyote and how smart he is. Big Tom at once began to be very nervous. He acted as if he expected to see Old Man Coyote spring out from behind a tree any minute, and he at once expressed a doubt about the wisdom of staying in such a neighborhood. Right away Peter saw that he had made a mistake in speaking so strongly about Old Man Coyote. He had done it with the best intentions in the world. He had done it to put Big Tom on guard. Now it looked as if Big Tom might leave, and this was the very last thing Peter wanted to happen.

"If you aren't afraid of Granny and Reddy Fox, I don't think you need to fear Old Man Coyote," Peter hastened to say. "Of course, he is some smarter than they, and he is a little bigger and stronger, but anyone who can keep out of the clutches of Granny and Reddy Fox ought to be able to fool Old Man Coyote. As I said before, he hasn't caught me yet, and he has tried times enough, goodness knows!" Peter grinned and Big Tom's eyes began to wrinkle a little, although he still looked a bit anxious.

"I wouldn't be afraid if I knew the country better," said he. "This is a strange place to me and I have got to learn all about it before I can know what is safe and what isn't. If you are too smart for Old Man Coyote I ought to be, but until I have become better acquainted here, I cannot feel easy. Foxes I know all about and they don't worry me. I've been hunted by them all my life, but here I am, and somewhere about here is Mrs. Gobbler.

"I must find her and tell her about Old Man Coyote. I don't know about trying to bring up a family with so many dangers about. Are there any of those two-legged creatures with terrible guns?"

Peter hesitated. He was afraid that if he said yes that this would settle the matter and that Big Tom would decide to move on somewhere else. Then a happy thought came to him. He knew that hunters with terrible guns no longer hunted in this part of the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows because of Farmer Brown's boy who had posted signs and who always warned hunters away. He didn't know what the signs meant, of course, but he did know that during the last hunting season the hunters had kept away, although they had hunted and hunted on all the land around Farmer Brown's. So he hastened to explain.

"As long as you stay here you are perfectly safe from hunters with terrible guns," said he, "but anywhere else you will be in danger from them in the Fall. They used to

come here but they don't anymore. Farmer Brown's boy won't let them."

"Who is Farmer Brown's boy?" demanded Big Tom suspiciously.

Peter told him. "He is the best friend we've got," he said.

Big Tom scratched his head thoughtfully. "That sounds a good deal like the very one who opened the box and let Mrs. Gobbler and me free," said he. "If that is the case, I guess we'll stay. Old Man Coyote may be dangerous, but hunters with terrible guns are worse. I was hunted so often down where I came from that it is a wonder that I am alive today. I've been told that I used to have relatives all through here, but they were killed, every last one of them, by hunters with terrible guns. You are sure they don't come here anymore?"

"Absolutely sure," replied Peter. Just then there was a rustle in the bushes and out stepped Mrs. Gobbler. "Who are you talking with, my dear?" said she to Big Tom.

STORY 1728. August 25, 1917

Mrs. Gobbler Settles the Question

The instant Mrs. Gobbler stepped into sight from the bushes, Big Tom swelled himself out, spread his tail like a great fan and dropped his wings just as he had been doing when Peter first saw him. It was clear that he was trying to look important. And he did look important. In fact Peter never had seen anyone who looked half as important. And he never had seen any one strut as Big Tom did.

But Mrs. Gobbler paid him no attention whatever. Indeed, she hardly gave him a glance. She merely looked about with eyes that seemed even sharper than those of Big Tom and again asked him who he had been talking to. Then she saw Peter, and of course she knew, "My goodness!" she exclaimed. "We never go anywhere that we do not find some of the Rabbit family. And they always have long ears. What have you been telling him?"

"Nothing, my dear. It is he who has been telling me things," replied Big Tom. "I have been asking Brer Rabbit about this place, which he pays is called the Green Forest and what dangers there may be."

"Well," replied Mrs. Gobbler sharply, "what dangers are there?"

"All the usual ones that we always have had and another we don't know anything about," replied Big Tom, who by this time had forgotten to strut.

"What is that, or who is it?" Mrs. Gobbler's voice sounded anxious and she looked worried.

"Well, we've got to watch out for a fellow something like Brer Fox, only bigger and smarter and gray instead of red. He is called 'Old Man Coyote,' according to Brer Rabbit here," explained Big Tom.

Mrs. Gobbler turned to Peter and began to pour out questions so fast that he had hard work to keep up with them. He told her all that he had told Big Tom about Old

Man Coyote, and she didn't once take her eyes from him while he talked. It rather flattered Peter to receive such close attention. At the last he told her how in the Fall the hunters with terrible guns no longer came there as they used to, because Farmer Brown and Farmer Brown's boy would not let them, and how because of this it was perfectly safe there while all about on other land no one was safe until the hunting season was over.

"That settles it," declared Mrs. Gobbler. "That settles it. If we can't keep out of the way of Old Man Coyote we deserve to be caught, but these hunters with terrible guns are another matter, and if there is any place in the wide, wide world where they do not come that is the place for us. We'll stay right here and make our home. That's what we'll do. From what little I have looked about, this seems like very good Turkey country. I rather think we shall enjoy living here."

"It's the most wonderful place in all the Great World," declared Peter with shining eyes.

Mrs. Gobbler gave him a funny sidewise glance. "How much of the Great World have you seen?" she asked.

"A—a—" Peter stopped, too confused to say another word. The truth is he never had been beyond the Green Forest, the Green Meadows, the Old Pasture and the Old Orchard. These make up all of the Great World that Peter really knows anything about.

STORY 1729. August 27, 1917

Peter Tries to Keep a Secret

It's hard to keep a secret that you fairly itch to tell;
Whoever does, you will agree, is doing wondrous well.

When at last Peter Rabbit parted from Big Tom Gobbler and Mrs. Gobbler in the Green Forest and started for his home in the dear Old Briar-patch he had given his word of honor that he would keep secret the fact that they had come to the Green Forest to live. You see he was the only one who knew it. That is, he was the only one save Farmer Brown's boy, who had set them free there. So Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler were very anxious to keep the fact a secret as long as they could. They thought that in this way they would have time to make their plans and learn all about the Green Forest and the dangers that might be lurking there and so be better prepared to meet those dangers.

Peter was quite as anxious as were they that this should be the case. He wanted them to stay. At the same time, he was fairly bursting with desire to tell the news of their arrival. You see, like a great many people, he dearly loves to gossip and to be the first to tell important news. But he had given his word to tell no one, not even Mrs. Peter, and he meant to keep that word. Now it didn't take little Mrs. Peter long to discover that Peter had something on his mind. She knows him so well that she can almost read his mind. She knew the instant he reached the dear Old Briar-patch that he had seen something very unusual. You see It showed right in his eyes.

Illustrations. August 20 to August 25, 1917.

1723. Peter Thinks He Must Be Dreaming
Just then Peter saw the print of a foot.

1724. Peter's Breath is Quite Taken Away
"Oh!" gasped Peter, and, though he didn't mean to, he moved ever so little.

1725. Peter Makes a New Acquaintance
With this, Peter sprang from his hiding place and started to run as only Peter can.

1726. Big Tom Asks Questions
"So Buster Bear lives here, does he?" exclaimed Big Tom.

1727. Peter Calms Big Tom
"Who is Farmer Brown's Boy?" demanded Big Tom suspiciously.

1728. Mrs. Gobbler Settles the Question
"It's the most wonderful place in all the Great World," declared Peter with shining eyes.

“Well, Peter, what is it this time?” she demanded.

Peter shifted his position uneasily. “What is what?” he mumbled.

“What have you seen over in the Green Forest or what have you heard or what have you done?” asked Mrs. Peter.

Peter turned his head so as not to look at little Mrs. Peter and mumbled something about having been a long way and being tired and wanting to sleep, all of which didn’t fool Mrs. Peter at all. Her eyes snapped.

“Peter Rabbit,” said she, “you needn’t think you can put me off that way. You are trying to keep something secret from me. Now what is it?”

But Peter, mindful of his promise to Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler, continued to mumble until finally little Mrs. Peter lost patience entirely.

“Very well,” said she, “keep your old secret if you want to. I don’t want to know it,” and she turned her back on Peter and hopped away to the other side of the dear Old Briar-patch holding her head very high.

Now of course it wasn’t true that she didn’t want to know that secret. She also is full of curiosity and she fairly ached to know what Peter had on his mind. She was only pretending that she didn’t care. As for Peter, he wanted to tell her quite as much as she wanted to be told, but there was his promise, his word of honor. So he kept his tongue still and tried to make himself believe that he didn’t care if little Mrs. Peter was put out about the matter. Mrs. Peter said nothing more, but she treated Peter very coldly. As for Peter he couldn’t keep away from the Green Forest. Every chance he got he slipped over there and sometimes he was gone so long that Mrs. Peter feared something had happened to him. Then a dreadful thought came to her. Could it be that Peter had fallen in love with another lady Rabbit over in the Green Forest?

STORY 1730. August 28, 1917

The Jealousy of Little Mrs. Peter

There’s nothing worse than jealousy;
  Few things are quite so bad.
It makes folks so suspicious that
  Results are often sad.

This was the case with little Mrs. Peter Rabbit. Peter had a secret which he was keeping from her. Furthermore, Peter was spending a great deal of time in the Green Forest. The dreadful thought that he might be in love with another lady Rabbit over there had popped into her head. At first she tried not to think of it, but the more she tried not to the more she did think of it. The fact is little Mrs. Peter was just simply and plainly jealous. And being jealous she wasn’t reasonable. Jealous folks never are reasonable. They imagine, all sorts of things that are not so.

So because little Mrs. Peter couldn’t think of any other reason which might take

Peter over to the Green Forest so much, she was absolutely sure that there was someone over there for whom he cared more than he did for her. She couldn't think of anything else and she made herself very, very miserable, almost sick over it. Also she made Peter very miserable. It got so that he no longer enjoyed coming home to the dear Old Briarpatch and so he spent more and more time in the Green Forest. He tried to get Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler to let him tell the secret of their presence in the Green Forest to Mrs. Peter, but they wouldn't. They said Peter had given his word not to and he must keep his promise. You see they were afraid that if he told Mrs. Peter she might tell somebody else and that one might tell another and so the secret would get out and be a secret no longer.

Little Mrs. Peter stood it as long as she could and then one day when Peter was away as usual Sammy Jay happened to stop at the dear Old Briar-patch. At sight of him jealousy prompted little Mrs. Peter to do something of which she should have been ashamed. It was to get Sammy Jay to spy on Peter, to follow him and find out for her what Peter was doing in the Green Forest.

So when Sammy asked where Peter was little Mrs. Peter told him that Peter was at home very little and spent most of his time in the Green Forest. She pretended not to care, but she artfully aroused Sammy's curiosity until he declared that he was going straight over to the Green Forest to find out what Peter was about.

"Will you do something for me?" asked Mrs. Peter as Sammy was about to spread his blue wings and start for the Green Forest.

"Certainly," replied Sammy good- naturedly. "What is it?"

"Just tell me what you find out," replied little Mrs. Peter. "I'm always worried when Peter is away so long, and I'd like to know what it is that keeps him away so much. He says it is a secret that he cannot tell, but of course he won't mind if someone else tells me."

Mrs. Peter was very careful not to even hint that she was jealous.

Sammy promised that he would tell her just what he should find out and away he flew to look for Peter Rabbit.

"It must be something interesting," muttered Sammy as he flew across the Green Meadows. "He must have discovered something that the rest of us I don't know about, but if he thinks he is going to keep it to himself he is mistaken."

You see Sammy Jay in his turn was jealous, but it was a different kind of jealousy from that of Mrs. Peter. Sammy cannot bear to have others know things that he doesn't know.

STORY 1731. August 29, 1917

Sammy Jay's Hunt for Peter Rabbit

When Sammy Jay started off to hunt for Peter Rabbit in the Green Forest he didn't

expect the least trouble in finding Peter. You see, he has known Peter so long that he knows all of Peter's habits and all of Peter's regular hiding places. So Sammy flew straight to a certain bramble-tangle on the edge of the Green Forest, but there was no Peter there. Then he flew to the nearest tangle of young hemlock trees, under which Peter often rests. No Peter there.

The result was the same everywhere Sammy looked. When he had visited all of Peter's familiar places and found no trace of him, Sammy stopped to think things over. He hadn't asked anybody if they had seen Peter, because he was afraid they would want to know why he was looking for Peter. Sammy didn't want to have to answer any such questions, because he felt sure that Peter must have some kind of an interesting secret and he wanted to find it out all himself. But now he decided that he would have to ask some questions.

First he looked up Mrs. Grouse and asked after her health.

"I suppose you see Peter Rabbit pretty often," said he in a careless way at last. "You two seem to be great friends."

"I haven't seen Peter Rabbit for so long that I have almost forgotten what he looks like," declared Mrs. Grouse. "I've begun to wonder if anything has happened to him. He used to be very neighborly, but he hasn't been around here since goodness knows when."

It was the same when Sammy talked to Paddy the Beaver. It appeared that no one had seen Peter Rabbit. Finally Sammy remembered a certain part of the Green Forest which he seldom visited. It was a lonely place and no one lived there as far as Sammy knew. He couldn't imagine any reason why Peter should go there, but Peter was always doing unexpected things and he might have gone there. It was also true that Peter might be taking a nap in some hollow log and so Sammy had missed him, but it was strange that none of his friends appeared to have seen Peter for some time. That looked as if Peter must be in another part of the Green Forest. So Sammy once more spread his wings and flew to this lonely place. He was quiet, very quiet. He flew from tree to tree, looking below sharply.

Suddenly he heard a sound which was quite new to him. It was a voice, but a voice he didn't recognize at all. It seemed to be saying "Quit, quit." Quietly Sammy stole forward until he could look down and see the very place from which the voice came. What he saw made him, for a few minutes, quite speechless with surprise. Peter Rabbit was there. Of course. It wasn't this that so astonished Sammy. It was the sight of Big Tom Gobbler strutting as only he can strut. Peter and Mrs. Gobbler were looking on in admiration. When Sammy at last found his voice he was so excited that he stuttered. P—P—P—Peter," he cried. "Wh—wh—who are these folks?"

Peter looked up and grinned.

"Hello, Sammy!" he exclaimed. "Those are my friends. Big Tom Gobbler and Mrs. Gobbler. They have come to the Green Forest to live. We've been keeping it a secret, but now you've found it out I suppose everybody'll know it."

STORY 1732. August 30, 1917

The Secret is Out

If you've a secret, don't, I pray,
Let it be known by Sammy Jay.

Sammy Jay can keep a secret. No one can keep a secret better. It all depends on whether he wants to keep it. If it is a secret of his own, you have got to be very smart indeed to find it out. If it is a secret of someone else, the chances are that it very soon will be no secret at all. You see Sammy is a great gossip. Then, too, when he has nothing special to do he dearly loves to make trouble for his neighbors. It isn't badness, but pure love of mischief that makes Sammy do this.

Peter Rabbit knows all this. No one knows it better. So as soon as Peter saw Sammy, he knew that the secret of the presence in the Green Forest of Big Tom Gobbler and Mrs. Gobbler would soon be a secret not longer. He said as much, whereupon Sammy Jay became very indignant.

"I guess I can keep a secret just as well as you can, Peter Rabbit!" he declared. "If there is anyone can keep a secret better than I can, it certainly isn't one of the Rabbit family."

Peter grinned. He rather enjoys seeing Sammy Jay lose his temper, I am sorry to say.

"It all depends on whether you want to keep it or not and I've noticed that you seldom want to," said he.

"I certainly don't want to keep this secret," snapped Sammy, who was a little put out by the fact that Peter had found out about Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler before he had. "There are people enough living here without any new ones, goodness knows."

"Quit, quit, quit," said Big Tom. "Isn't that just like a Jay? I know the Jay family and it is mighty little good I know of them."

"O, Sammy doesn't mean anything by what he says," Peter hurried to say. "He talks just to hear his own voice. I've known him to do some of the nicest things. Really, I have."

"Then he's different from the Jays I've known," spluttered Big Tom, glaring up at Sammy and getting very red in the face.

Sammy glared back, too angry to speak. Then without a word he turned and flew away. Peter sighed regretfully. He knew that Sammy had gone to spread the news all through the Green Forest and over the Green Meadows and he had wanted to be the first to tell the news himself.

"The secret is out now," said he, turning to Big Tom. "Everybody'll know it before this day is over. I hope you'll stay just the same."

"Gobble-obble-obble!" said Big Tom. "Gobble-obble-obble! We'll stay. People as

big as we are bound to be discovered sooner or later. We've had time to get acquainted with the Green Forest, so I guess it doesn't matter now how soon it is known that we are here. I suspect that we'll have to keep a right smart watch for visitors now."

"I suspect you will," replied Peter. "Old Man Coyote and Reddy Fox won't lose any time in making you a visit once they know you are here. I guess now I'll go home and tell Mrs. Peter."

With this Peter started for the dear Old Briar Patch, lipperty-lipperty-lip, as fast as he could go.

STORY 1733. August 31, 1917

How the News was Received

Sammy Jay was happy. There was no question about it—he was happy. He is always happy when he is the bearer of news and this news which he had to tell was the greatest news since the coming of Buster Bear to the Green Forest[34]. It was the news that Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler had come to the Green Forest to live. First Sammy flow straight to the dear Old Briar-patch to tell little Mrs. Peter what he had found out about Peter as he had promised he would, and as he flew he chuckled.

"Peter found them first, but he won't have the fun of spreading the news," muttered Sammy, and chuckled again. "He won't even have the fun of telling Mrs. Peter."

When he reached the dear Old Briar-patch he found little Mrs. Peter waiting anxiously.

"Peter is all right," said he as soon as he could get his breath. "He has some new friends over in the Green Forest and it is to visit them that he goes over there so much."

"What kind of friends?" asked little Mrs. Peter faintly and turning her face away so that Sammy might not see the jealousy she knew must show in it.

"Strangers," replied Sammy promptly. "They call themselves Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler and they've come to the Green Forest to make their home. They are the biggest birds I ever laid my two eyes on and they live on the ground same as Mr. and Mrs. Grouse do. You ought to see them. I didn't suppose that anyone wearing feathers could get so big. Won't Reddy Fox and Old Man Coyote be tickled when I tell them the news? Now I must hurry on."

Sammy was as good as his word and at once spread his wings. He was in such a hurry that he didn't see the change in little Mrs. Peter. As soon as he was out of sight, she did a funny little dance. All her jealousy had vanished now that she knew that Peter wasn't in love with someone else. "It was just his curiosity and nothing else that has taken him away so much. Still I think he might have told me," she added.

As for Sammy Jay he hurried straight over to the Old Pasture, where Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy had their new home.

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34 STORY 676, 1914.

"Don't you wish you knew what I know?" he taunted Reddy.

"If I did, I wouldn't know much," growled Reddy crossly.

Sammy grinned.

"Perhaps not, but still it would be more than you know now," said he. "There are two new comers over in the Green Forest and they are going to make their home there unless someone is smart enough to catch them before they have a chance. They are bigger than Honker the Goose, wear feathers and when I saw them one was strutting just as Mr. Grouse does, only more so."

Reddy was suddenly all attention. He pricked up his ears. "Were they on the ground?" he asked.

"Of course, stupid!" exclaimed Sammy. "How could one of them have been strutting if they were not?"

"What are their names?" asked Reddy.

"Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler," replied Sammy promptly.

Reddy's eyes glistened. "That sounds like Turkey," he declared. "I know a farm where there are turkeys, but I've never been able to catch one, because they have been watched too closely. That's the best news I have heard for a long time, Sammy, and I'm much obliged to you for it."

"Don't mention it," replied Sammy and started off to look for Old Man Coyote. Looking back, he saw Reddy Fox trotting off in the direction of the Green Forest, and he chuckled. When he found Old Man Coyote and told him the news the same thing happened and Sammy chuckled again.

"People seem to like my news," said he, and headed back for the Green Forest to see what would happen there.

STORY 1734. September 1, 1917

Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler Receive a Visitor

No sooner had Sammy Jay and Peter Rabbit left them than Big Tom and began to prepare for what might happen. You know there is nothing like being prepared for everything.

"My dear," said Mrs. Gobbler, "we very soon will receive visitors, and I think the best place to receive them will be where those who otherwise might prove unpleasant cannot get. Come along with me."

"Just as you say," replied Big Tom meekly.

Mrs. Gobbler ran a few steps, spread her wings and flew up in a big tree. Big Tom followed and settled himself comfortably beside her. There they waited for the visitors they were sure would come. It was very still there in that lonely part of the Green Forest and for a long time nothing happened. Big Tom began to grow sleepy, but Mrs.

Gobbler was very much awake. Her sharp eyes watched the ground below in every direction and her keen ears listened for the least little sound.

It was a long time after Sammy Jay left them that she heard a faint rustle and nudged Big Tom. In an instant he was wide awake. He, too, heard the rustle. Light foot-steps were approaching. Presently they caught a glimpse of something red moving swiftly. In a moment they got a full view. It was Reddy Fox and he was running with his nose to the ground. He was following the tracks they had made when they had been on the ground, On his face was an eager, hungry look. His eyes glistened and his mouth watered. Presently he came to the place where they had left the ground, and of course there were no more tracks for his sharp nose to follow. He ran this way and that way trying to find where they had gone. Finally Big Tom could stand it no longer.

"Quit, quit," said he. "Have you lost something, Brer Fox?"

Instantly a complete change, a very complete change, swept over Reddy's face. His mouth stopped watering. The glisten left his eyes. The eagerness went out of his face. He looked up and grinned in a way that was intended to be very pleasant and at the same time he wore a look of complete surprise. The change was so complete and sudden that Big Tom chuckled.

"Have you lost something, Brer Fox?" he repeated.

Reddy showed all his teeth in what I was intended for a smile. There wasn't a trace of disappointment, although the truth is he was sadly disappointed to find Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler high above him instead of on the ground.

"No and yes," said he. "I am looking for Peter Rabbit, but I seem to have lost his tracks. Have you seen him about here?"

"Not for some time," replied Big Tom. "He was here but he left a long time ago."

"You appear to be strangers here," continued Reddy. "Allow me to welcome you to the Green Forest. Have you been here long?"

"Long enough to learn our way about," replied Big Tom. "This seems like a very nice place and we are thinking of settling here."

"It is a nice place. It's a very fine place and I'm sure you will like it," said Reddy. "I'm glad to know that you are thinking of settling here. I will be very glad to show you about and help you find a place to make your home. Won't you come down and take a walk with me now? There are some beautiful places I would like to show you."

Reddy was very polite, charmingly polite.

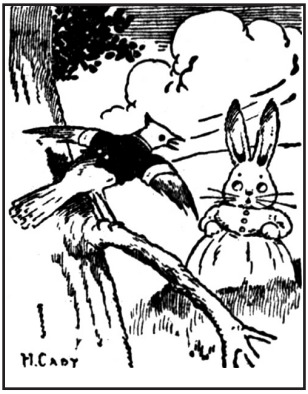
"Thank you," replied Big Tom, a twinkle in his eyes. "Thank you very much, Brer Fox, but just now we are rather tired, so we'll ask to be excused. Perhaps we'll go with you some other time."

"Any time, you say," returned Reddy, hiding his disappointment. "Shall we say early this evening?"

"We'll think it over. If it is not too much trouble, you might call around then,"

Illustrations. August 27 to September 1, 1917.

1729. Peter Tries to Keep a Secret
"Well, Peter, what is it this time?" she demanded.



1730. The Jealousy of Little Mrs. Peter
"Will you do something for me?" asked Mrs. Peter.

1731. Sammy Jay's Hunt for Peter Rabbit
It was the same when Sammy talked with Paddy the Beaver.

1732. The Secret is Out
"Quit, quit, quit," said Big Tom. "Isn't that just like a Jay?"

1733. How the News was Received
"Peter is all right," said he, as soon as he could get his breath.

1734. Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler Receive a Visitor
"Quit, quit," said he. "Have you lost something, Brer Fox?"

responded Big Tom.

"No trouble at all," replied Reddy. "I'll be here at shadow-time. Allow me to wish you long life and happiness."

With this Reddy made a low bow and turned away[35].

STORY 1735. September 3, 1917

Another Visitor Arrives

When Reddy Fox left Big Tom Gobbler and Mrs. Gobbler sitting snug and safe in a big tree in the Green Forest he didn't intend to go far. You remember that he had invited them to take a walk with him at shadow time, but he was far too clever to depend wholly on the chance that they would accept. Now that he had seen them, he felt that nothing in the world was so much to be desired as a turkey dinner, and there was a chance that they might come down from their perch before shadow time. If they did—well, Reddy Fox meant to be around. So he merely pretended to go away. As soon as he was sure that they couldn't see him he crept back slowly, carefully, taking care not to rustle a leaf. Back he crept until he was snugly hidden where he could watch Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler but couldn't be seen by them. And now once more his mouth watered and his eyes glistened.

Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler continued to sit on their comfortable perch in the big tree and Reddy could hear them talking, but he couldn't understand what they were saying. If he could have his ears certainly would have burned.

"He's just like all the rest of the Fox family," chuckled Big Tom. "I wonder how many times we've been invited to take a walk with a Fox at shadow time. And I wonder if he thinks we think he really has gone away."

"Look!" whispered Mrs. Gobbler sharply. "Who is that coming this way?"

Big Tom looked. He saw a gray form not unlike the form of Reddy Fox but larger. He saw a face sharp like the face of Reddy Fox but shrewder looking.

"It must be Old Man Coyote," he whispered, and leaned forward to see better. In doing this he made just the teeniest, weeniest rustle. Instantly the stranger stopped and looked up. He grinned.

"Good afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Gobbler," said he, "I've just heard of your arrival. Welcome to the Green Forest, and long may you live—if you can."

The last three words he said under his breath.

"I am Old Man Coyote," he continued. "I hope that presently we shall become better acquainted."

He grinned again and Big Tom grinned back, for he knew very well what kind of a closer acquaintance Old Man Coyote meant. "Thank you," said he. "I wonder if that wish comes from the heart or the stomach."

35 Compare this set of stories with STORIES 121-124, 1912.

Old Man Coyote's eyes snapped. "Decidedly," said he to himself, "there is nothing stupid about these folks. They are not going to be so easily caught an I had hoped." Aloud he said: "Do you ever visit the Green Meadows? I hope I shall have the pleasure of meeting you over there, and I would be delighted to have you visit the Old Pasture where I live. It is a very nice place. I am quite fond of it myself. I have a feeling that if you once visited it, you would never leave it."

"That is strange. Do you know. I have very much the same feeling myself," replied Big Tom without a trace of a smile. "However, we have become very fond of the Green Forest and I think we shall postpone the pleasure of a visit to the Old Pasture until we have become more familiar with the Green Forest. These are fine big trees here, Mr. Coyote."

There was a twinkle in Big Tom's eyes which Old Man Coyote didn't miss. "Very fine. Very fine, indeed," said he. "I prefer the open myself, but I quite understand why you are fond of the trees."

He grinned once more, and Big Tom grinned back, for he knew that Old Man Coyote knew perfectly that the reason he and Mrs. Gobbler were fond of the trees was because in them they were safe.

"I hope I shall see you often," continued Old Man Coyote. "By the way, let me warn you not to trust a certain fellow in red who lives near here, one Reddy Fox by name. He has a smooth tongue, but also he has sharp teeth.

"Are they any sharper than yours?" asked Big Tom, looking as innocent as you please.

"Not quite so sharp," retorted Old Man Coyote, grinning more broadly than ever, for he knew that Big Tom knew just why he had paid them this visit. "I must be going now," he added.

With this he started off straight toward the spot where Reddy Fox was hiding.

STORY 1736. September 4, 1917

Reddy Fox is on Hand at Shadow Time

When you've agreed to go some place,
    Be prompt.
When you've agreed to do a thing.
    Be prompt.
Don't ever make another wait;
See to it you are never late;
    Be prompt.

When Reddy Fox saw Old Man Coyote heading for the place where he was hiding so as to watch Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler he gritted his teeth, snarled under his breath and then promptly stole away as swiftly and silently as he knew how. You see he had no desire to meet Old Man Coyote. He is afraid of him. Old Man Coyote saw him go

and chuckled. He had known all the time that Reddy was hiding there. His nose had told him that.

But Reddy didn't chuckle. No, indeed, Reddy didn't chuckle. He was in a bad temper, was Reddy, for this upset all his plans. He had suspected Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler might leave their safe perch in the tall tree and come down on the ground when they thought no one

I was about. He had hoped that if this was the case he might be able to catch one of them without waiting until shadow time. Now he didn't dare hang around to watch, and it was all on account of Old Man Coyote. Reddy fairly hated him. It wasn't the first time Old Man Coyote had upset his carefully laid plans, and the worst of it was there was nothing he could do about it.

So Reddy sneaked off to his home in the Old Pasture and sulked all the rest of that day while he waited for shadow time. You know he had invited Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler to take a walk with him then. He had offered to show them some of the pleasant places in the Green Forest.

As soon as Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler were quite sure that both Reddy and Old Man Coyote really had left they flew down to the ground and for the rest of the day they were fairly busy getting enough to eat. A little before shadow time they flew back to their perch in the tall tree and contentedly waited for Reddy Fox to appear.

He came with the first Black Shadows that crept through the Green Forest. Reddy believes in promptness. He was looking his very best, and when Reddy looks his very best, he is handsome. He carried his big plumed tail proudly. He wore his pleasantest expression.

"Good evening, neighbors," said he and tried hard to make his voice sound pleasant and gentle. "I hope I haven't kept you waiting."

"Not at all, Brer Fox, not at all," replied Big Tom. "It is a pleasure to meet with such promptness."

Again Reddy Fox bowed. "Thank you," said he. No one can be more polite than Reddy when he wants to be. "I hope you and Mrs. Gobbler have thought over my invitation to walk with me while I show you some of the beautiful places of the Green Forest."

"We have, thank you, Brer Fox," replied Big Tom without even the shadow of a smile, "but we will have to beg to be excused this evening. You see we couldn't wait until evening and we took such a long walk this afternoon that Mrs. Gobbler is quite tired out. Besides, we have made it a rule never to move about after shadow time. I am sorry you have been to the trouble of coming way over here for nothing."

Big Tom nudged Mrs. Gobbler and she nearly chuckled aloud.

STORY 1737. September 5, 1917

Reddy Fox and His Second Invitation

When Big Tom Gobbler, looking down from his perch in a tall tree, told Reddy Fox that he, Big Tom, and Mrs. Gobbler had already had a long walk in the Green Forest, and besides had a rule never to move about after shadow time, Reddy's heart was once more filled with rage and disappointment, but he took great care not to show it. It was hard work, but he managed to remain as polite and smiling as ever.

"Don't mention it. I beg of you don't mention it, Mr. Gobbler," said he when Big Tom apologized for giving him all the trouble of coming way over there for nothing. "It is a pleasure just to see you and Mrs. Gobbler." This was quite true. "I never have seen such handsome people in my life," continued Reddy, "nor have I ever seen any one in feathers who could even approach you in size and strength. Just to look at you makes me feel very small and of little importance. I cannot imagine you being afraid of anyone."

Big Tom began to ruffle out his feathers the way he does when he struts, but Mrs. Gobbler nudged him. "The flattery of a Fox is dangerous," she whispered. Big Tom looked as if he felt a little foolish and stopped ruffling up his feathers.

"Since you have made it a rule not to move about after shadow time," continued Reddy in his smoothest tones, "perhaps we can take our walk some other time. On my way over here, I passed a most delightful spot for a sun bath."

"A dust bath would be more to our liking," interrupted Big Tom.

"A dust bath?" cried Reddy. "Did you say a dust bath? Why, my dear Mr. Gobbler, I know the finest place in all the world for a dust bath, and I will be delighted to show it to you."

"Is it far from here?" asked Big Tom. "Not at all far," replied Reddy with great promptness. "In fact, it is so near here that we can go over there now before dark if you say so. It is just on the other side of that little hill yonder, an open place in an old road. Mr. and Mrs. Grouse take dust baths there often. What do you say if we walk over there now so that you may see it?"

"Not tonight, Brer Fox. Not tonight," said Big Tom, pretending to yawn. "It is too near our bedtime. Perhaps some other time."

"Just as you say, Mr. Gobbler," returned Reddy smiling. "Speaking of that place reminds me that I have an appointment over beyond there an hour after sun-up tomorrow morning. I tell you what I'll do; I'll just come around this way and if you will do me the honor to join me, I will show you the place and you can take your dust bath while I go on to keep my appointment."

"O, Brer Fox, I wouldn't put you to all that trouble for the world!" exclaimed Big Tom.

"It will be no trouble at all; not the least bit of trouble," cried Reddy eagerly, just a wee bit too eagerly, Big Tom thought. "It will be a pleasure. I cannot think of a greater pleasure. I'll be along an hour after sun-up tomorrow morning. Now I'll trot along. I wish you and Mrs. Gobbler the pleasantest of pleasant dreams."

STORY 1738. September 6, 1917

Big Tom is Apologetic

To be apol-o-get-ic means to express regret; to say that you are sorry for some trouble you may have caused others, or for hurting the feelings of another. Usually, one who is apologetic tries to explain his actions. This was the case with Big Tom Gobbler the morning after the second invitation of Reddy Fox. Mrs. Gobbler said nothing. She left all the talking to Big Tom.

You remember that Reddy Fox had told Big Tom that he, Reddy, would call an hour after sun-up to show the way to the finest dust bath in the Green Forest. Reddy had been hunting all night without much success, but he hadn't minded that much because all the time he was thinking of what a feast he would have on Big Tom or Mrs. Gobbler if they were stupid enough to accept his invitation to go with him to find that dust bath.

That they would be stupid enough he hadn't a doubt because he judged them by what he had learned of Farmer Brown's hens, who are very stupid indeed. To be sure, Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler were not hens, but they were feathered creatures who lived on the ground mostly, just like the hens, and so somehow Reddy couldn't think of them as being any smarter.

Being awake all night, Reddy didn't have to worry about oversleeping. When it was most time for jolly, round red Mr. Sun to kick off his rosy blankets and begin his daily climb up in the blue, blue sky Reddy sat where he could watch for the first sign of Mr. Sun. By and by over in the east the sky began to grow lighter and lighter. Then above the edge of the world appeared jolly, round, red Mr. Sun, Reddy wondered, as he had wondered many times, why it was that Mr. Sun was so much bigger when he first got up than later in the day. He waited until Mr. Sun was well started on his climb up in the blue, blue sky and then started for the tree in the Green Forest where Big Tom Gobbler and Mrs. Gobbler had spent the night.

They were sitting just where he had left them the night before and Reddy turned aside his head to hide a grin at the thought of the great feast, he felt sure he would have that morning. "Good morning Mr. and Mrs. Gobbler," said he briskly. "Did you ever see a finer morning? I trust you passed a pleasant night."

"Very pleasant, Brer Fox, very pleasant," replied Big Tom, yawning as if he had just awakened. "I hope you did the same."

"I certainly did," was Reddy's prompt response. "I am glad to see you looking so fresh this morning. I am on my way to keep that appointment I told you of last night and it will give me the greatest pleasure in the world if you and Mrs. Gobbler will walk with me as far as an old road where you can take your dust bath. Shall we start at once?"

Big Tom cleared his throat as if a trifle embarrassed. "If you'll excuse us," said he, "I don't think Mrs. Gobbler and I will go with you this morning, Brer Fox. The fact is

we have been over there and had our dust bath and we are very, very much obliged to you for telling us about that place. Indeed we are, Brer Fox. You see it happens that we are very early risers. We were awake an hour before sun-up and while out looking for breakfast happened over by that old road. We couldn't resist the temptation to take a dust bath then. I hope this hasn't put you out at all Brer Fox, but as you said you had an appointment and would be coming this way I don't suppose it has."

"Not at all. Not at all," replied Reddy, trying to speak cordially, although inside he was fairly boiling with rage and disappointment, for you see he hadn't any appointment. He had just made that up.

STORY 1739. September 7, 1917

Reddy Tries Again

When you have tried and tried again
A certain thing to do
Don't quit! Don't quit, but keep right on
To find a way that's new.

That is what Reddy Fox always does. He doesn't always succeed, but he succeeds a great deal oftener than he would if he were content to give up after trying only once. He had set his heart and his stomach on either Big Tom or Mrs. Gobbler for a dinner. He had tried twice to get them to take a walk with him and each time he had failed. He couldn't catch them while they were in a tree. His only chance was to get them down on the ground and no one knew this better than did Reddy.

Very cleverly Reddy had kept his disappointment at his two failures to himself. It was hard work, but he managed to appear very pleasant and polite. Now, although he was fairly boiling with rage inside, he was clever enough not to show it, and at the same time to set his wits to work on a new plan. But Reddy made one great mistake, a mistake that smart people are very apt to make. He didn't once think that Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler might be quite as smart as he. In fact, he didn't think them smart at all. It didn't enter his head that they might have purposely spoiled his well-laid plans because they suspected him and were not at all so stupid as he thought them.

He was thinking fast, was Reddy Fox, for he prides himself on the quickness of his wits. It would be useless to suggest anything for after shadow time; Big Tom had said that they didn't move about then. But why not just before shadow time? He shrewdly guessed that they would be ready for a good supper then.

"There is a hollow not far from here where there are still many acorns on the ground, very sweet acorns, so I have heard it said. Are you fond of sweet acorns?" Reddy seemed to have no thought but that of making the Green Forest a place of delight for the Gobblers.

"Very," replied Big Tom, while Mrs. Gobbler snapped her bill, which is her way of smacking her lips.

"Really?" exclaimed Reddy. "How very fortunate I thought of that hollow. I will be along this way about an hour before shadow time and it will give me the greatest pleasure in the world to show you that hollow where the sweet acorns are. It is not so far but that there will be plenty of time for you to eat your fill and get back here to your roost before the Black Shadows come."

"That is very good of you, Brer Fox, and very thoughtful," replied Big Tom. "What a good neighbor you are. Mrs. Gobbler and I appreciate your offer and we will look for you an hour before shadow time. I hope it will not put you out to come way over here again."

"Not at all. Not the least bit in the world," replied Reddy. "It will be a pleasure, a very great pleasure. Indeed, I don't know when I have looked forward to so great a pleasure as this will be. Now I must be on my way as I have some important matters to attend to. By the way, there is a no-account fellow by the name of Old Man Coyote who hangs around these parts a good deal. He is a dangerous character and not to be trusted. I mention the matter simply because you are strangers and I wouldn't for the world have anything happen to either of you."

"Thank you," replied Big Tom. "We'll keep our eyes open for him. A pleasant day to you, Brer Fox."

"The same to you," replied Reddy, and trotted off as if he did in truth have important matters to attend to.

STORY 1740. September 8, 1917

Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler Take a Little Trip

For some little time after Reddy Fox had disappeared Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler sat without moving save to occasionally turn a head in order to listen better. At last Big Tom shifted his position, shook out his feathers and looked at Mrs. Gobbler with a funny twinkle in his eyes.

"How would you like some nice sweet acorns, my dear?" he asked.

Mrs. Gobbler chuckled. "I can't think of anything nicer, can you?" said she. "Not just this minute," replied Big Tom. "It is a long time to an hour before shadow time."

Again Mrs. Gobbler chuckled. "He said that hollow is near here," she remarked, "and I suspect that for once he told the truth. Did you know, my dear, I think it is better for the health to dine two hours before shadow time. I think a little exercise before then will do us both good. We might visit a few of the little hollows about here which we have not already visited if there are any."

"The very idea I had in my own mind," replied Big Tom. "I think we have already visited most of the hollows, but there is one on the other side of this hill which we haven't been in yet. What do you say if by and by we make a little trip over there?"

Mrs. Gobbler agreed that this would be just the thing to do, providing it was quite

safe to do so. Big Tom was certain it was quite safe.

"That fox," said he, "won't hang around for fear we'll see him and become suspicious. He thinks we are stupid, and the longer he thinks so the better for us. He won't be really dangerous until he wakes up to the fact that we are as smart as he. Now Old Man Coyote is different. We haven't laid eyes on him since that first call. That means that we have got to have our eyes and our ears wide open for him all the time. When you are ready, we'll exercise our wings a little. We'll fly to the top of the hill where we can see all over the hollow and then if the way is clear we'll go down there and find out if Brer Fox told the truth about those acorns."

This is how it happened that two hours before shadow time Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler were busily scratching over the dead leaves on the ground in the hollow where the acorns were and were finding that Reddy had indeed told the truth.

"I dislike to interrupt a feast, but it is almost time for Neighbor Fox to make us his promised call and we really should be at home," said Big Tom at last.

Mrs. Gobbler scratched over some more leaves and swallowed another fat acorn. "I suppose you are right," she sighed. "As soon as I find one more we'll go."

It was high time, for it was almost an hour before shadow time. Hardly had they reached their roost in the tall tree where Reddy had visited them that morning when they saw his red coat among the trees. He was trotting along briskly and as usual he wore his pleasantest expression.

"I hope Brer Fox won't be too badly disappointed," chuckled Big Tom as they watched Reddy approach.

STORY 1741. September 10, 1917

Reddy Fox Shows His True Self

Reddy Fox was a trifle early. It was almost, but not quite an hour before shadow time. He was early purposely. He wanted to be sure that Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler should have no excuse this time. As soon as he saw them on their perch in the tall tree, he quickened his steps. His smile, as he looked up at them was really a grin—a crafty grin, though he didn't know it. He meant it for an innocent smile.

"Here I am," said he. "I hope I haven't kept you waiting."

He knew he hadn't. Of course. He said that just to make it sound as if he had no thought but the convenience of the Gobblers.

"Not at all, Neighbor Fox," replied Big Tom. "It is a pleasure to meet with one who believes in promptness and lives up to it."

"Thank you," replied Reddy. "I believe in always being on time. It is the only way of making sure of things in this world. Are you and Mrs. Gobbler ready to go with me for these sweet acorns? I don't want to hurry you, but I recall what you said about wanting to be on your roost by shadow time, and I know that those acorns are going to

Illustrations. September 3 to September 8, 1917.

1735. Another Visitor Arrives
"Good afternoon, Mr. and Mrs. Gobbler," said he.

1736. Reddy Fox is on Hand at Shadow Time
"Good evening, neighbors," said he.

1737. Reddy Fox and His Second Invitation
"Is it far from here?" asked Big Tom.

1738. Big Tom is Apologetic
Then above the edge of the world appeared jolly, round, red Mr. Sun.

1739. Reddy Tries Again
"That is very good of you, Brer Fox," replied Big Tom.

1740. Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler Take a Little Trip
"It is almost time for Neighbor Fox to make his promised call," said Big Tom.

taste so good that an hour will be all too short a time for you."

"I—I'm sorry," said Big Tom in a hesitating way, as if he were a little embarrassed. The fact is, Brer Fox, we are so full of sweet acorns this blessed minute that we couldn't eat as other one."

"What?" cried Reddy sharply.

Big Tom nodded.

"It's a fact," said he. "You see, we got to thinking about sweet acorns after you left until we couldn't stand it. We Just couldn't stand it. So we took a little trip, and do you know I think that we must have found that very hollow you told us about. Anyway there were plenty of sweet acorns there. They were the finest acorns I have tasted for a long time, and we had a real feast didn't we, my dear." Big Tom turned to Mrs. Gobbler as he said this, and Mrs. Gobbler nodded.

"We had only just returned when we saw you coming," continued Big Tom, "and we want to thank you, Brer Fox for telling us about those acorns. That is what I call true neighborliness. I hope that someday we can do something just as nice for you."

Reddy Fox had listened to this with feelings in which surprise and disappointment had mingled with anger, and finally a suspicion that grew to a certainty that all this time Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler had seen through his seeming friendliness and had known just what he was trying to do. The grin which he had meant to be friendly turned to an ugly snarl, which showed all his teeth, and his eyes snapped with rage.

"You think you're smart, don't you?" he barked.

"Not smart, Brer Fox. Not really smart, but just a little bit smarter than you," replied Big Tom, grinning more than ever. "You see, the first thing Mrs. Gobbler and learned when we were little was this: Never trust a Fox. And the second thing was: Never put faith in a flatterer. We have known Foxes all our lives and so you didn't fool us for so much as a minute. Just the same we are much obliged to you for telling us about that fine dust bath and those sweet acorns, and I hope there will be no hard feelings on your part."

Reddy glared up at Big Tom and ground his teeth.

"I'll get you. As sure as my name Reddy Fox, I'll get you," he snarled. He was showing his true self.

STORY 1742. September 11, 1917

Big Tom Becomes Lonesome

Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler were thoroughly at home in the Green Forest, and it wasn't long before they felt quite as if they always had lived there. For a while they had received a great deal of attention from the other little people of the Green Forest, but this was chiefly from curiosity, and once that was satisfied, they were left much to themselves, especially as Spring gave way to early Summer and everybody was

occupied with household cares. Reddy Fox and Old Man Coyote had exhausted all their wiles trying to catch Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler napping without getting so much as a feather.

Peter Rabbit still came over to call regularly. He and Big Tom were the best of friends. Peter never tired of watching Big Tom strut. For the first week or two Big Tom did a great deal of this, and it was all for the benefit of Mrs. Gobbler, as Peter found out. She would appear not to notice it, but Peter often saw her watching Big Tom with pride and admiration shining in her eyes, and once she confided to Peter that Big Tom was the handsomest, most wonderful bird that ever lived. But she never allowed Big Tom to see her watching. In fact, she managed to appear so very indifferent that he quite outdid himself in his efforts to make her take notice. Then one day Peter found Big Tom alone and looking quite disconsolate. There was no strutting now. In fact, he wandered about in such an uneasy way that Peter began suspect something was wrong.

"Where is Mrs. Gobbler," he asked. "I don't know," replied Big Tom mournfully.

"You don't mean to say that anything has happened to her!" cried Peter anxiously.

"I don't know," repeated Big Tom. "All I know is that she has disappeared and I have nearly gobbled my head off without once getting a reply. I've looked everywhere without finding a trace of her."

"Do you think Reddy Fox or Old Man Coyote can have caught her?" asked Peter excitedly.

"No," replied Big Tom in such a decided tone that Peter knew he meant it. "Mrs. Gobbler is too smart to be caught by either of them. If they had I certainly would have found some of her feathers. No, neither Reddy Fox nor Old Man Coyote has dined on Mrs. Gobbler yet and I don't think they ever will. It is my opinion that she has gone away, but where I haven't the least idea. It seems to me I never knew such a lonely place as the Green Forest. I have half a mind to leave it myself."

"O, I wouldn't do that!" exclaimed Peter. "You would be just as lonesome anywhere else."

"I suppose I would," sighed Big Tom. After that he said nothing more, but wandered about restlessly, and every time there was a faint rustle of leaves he would turn eagerly in the direction of the sound, and then when he found it had not been made by Mrs. Gobbler would again begin to walk about aimlessly. It was plain to see that Big Tom was not happy. He was lonesome. There was no doubt about it. Peter made up his mind then and there that he would come over to see Big Tom every day to try to make him less lonesome.

STORY 1743. September 12, 1917

Big Tom is in a Bad Humor

Peter Rabbit made it a rule to try to call on Big Tom every day to inquire if he had had any news of Mrs. Gobbler. You remember that Mrs. Gobbler had disappeared in the

most mysterious way, leaving Big Tom very lonesome and disconsolate. It was partly on this account that Peter tried to call on Big Tom every day. He hoped these visits would make Big Tom less lonesome. And always Big Tom seemed glad to have him come.

As for what had become of Mrs. Gobbler, no one seemed to have the least idea. Peter asked everyone he met, but none could tell him anything about her, and none besides himself appeared to be interested.

You see, most of Peter's neighbors had so many family cares just then that they had no time to think of the affairs of others. So Peter did a lot of looking here and looking there without finding any trace of Mrs. Gobbler. He strongly suspected that Old Man Coyote could tell something about that strange disappearance if he only would, but these suspicions were swept away when by chance he overheard Old Man Coyote asking Sammy Jay if he knew what had become of Mrs. Gobbler and Sammy promising to find out if he could.

Then Peter suspected Reddy Fox, but when one day as Peter lay hidden in a bramble-tangle on the edge of the Green Forest he heard Reddy muttering to himself as he trotted past.

"I'll get one of those Gobblers, yet, as sure as my name is Reddy Fox," said Reddy.

Then Peter knew that Reddy couldn't have been the cause of the strange disappearance of Mrs. Gobbler.

As soon as he felt sure it was safe to leave the bramble-tangle he hastened to look for Big Tom. He wanted to tell him that he was sure that neither Old Man Coyote nor Reddy Fox had caught Mrs. Gobbler. As soon as he saw Big Tom he knew that something was wrong. At least it was plain to see that Big Tom was in a bad humor.

"Good morning, Big Tom," said Peter. "I've got some news for you."

What is it?" snapped Big Tom. "I've found out that neither Old Man Coyote nor Reddy Fox has caught Mrs. Gobbler," replied Peter.

"Gobble-obble-obble! That's no news!" retorted Big Tom. "Of course they haven't. I could have told you that. I told you the other day that they hadn't. I told you that I suspected that Mrs. Gobbler had gone away, though I believe I also told you that I hadn't the least idea why. Now I have. I remember now that last year and the year before at just this season she did the same thing. She has gone away, but she hasn't gone far. She's simply hiding. That's all."

"But who is she hiding from?" demanded Peter, looking the very picture of surprise.

"From me, of course!" snapped Big Tom. "If I could find her, I'd teach her a lesson. Yes, I would. I'd teach her that she has no business to treat me this way."

Big Tom walked about in a way that showed he was in a very bad humor indeed. In fact, he was red in the face with anger.

STORY 1744. September 13, 1917

Big Tom's Jealousy

Peter Rabbit didn't know what to think. When Mrs. Gobbler had first disappeared, Big Tom had seemed worried and anxious, afraid that something had happened to Mrs. Gobbler. Now here he was, red in the face with anger and saying that nothing at all had happened, but that Mrs. Gobbler had run away from him and was hiding. It was very clear that Big Tom believed just what he said.

Peter scratched first one long ear and then the other, a way he has of doing when he is puzzled.

"But why did she run away from you? Have you been treating her badly?" he asked.

"Certainly not!" retorted Big Tom indignantly, answering the last question first. "She ran away to steal her nest."

"To steal whose nest?" asked Peter, still more puzzled.

"Her own, of course," snapped Big Tom.

"But how can anyone steal their own nest?" persisted Peter.

"Oh, that's just a way of speaking," replied Big Tom impatiently. "It means that she has stolen away and hidden her nest from me. I know it. She's done it before."

"Why?" asked Peter. "What under the sun should she want to hide her nest from you for?"

Big Tom looked a little foolish and uncomfortable. "I suppose she is afraid I would break the eggs," said he at last.

Peter looked as amazed as he felt.

"How queer!" he exclaimed. "Of course you wouldn't!"

"Well," confessed Big Tom uneasily, "I may have broken a few in the past. You see, when Mrs. Gobbler has a nest, she spends all her time sitting on those eggs and doesn't pay the least attention to me. In fact, I might be a stick or a stone for all she cares for me. She hasn't a thought in her silly head for anyone or anything but those eggs. She won't go anywhere with me. She'll hardly leave those eggs long enough to eat.

"She doesn't care how lonesome I may be. She doesn't care anything about me. I know well enough that she has got a nest full of eggs this very minutes, and if I could find them—

Big Tom didn't finish the sentence, but he once more grew red in the face with anger and walked back and forth muttering. Slowly it entered Peter's mind that Big Tom was jealous. Yes, sir, he was jealous. He was jealous of his own eggs because

Mrs. Gobbler gave them all her attention instead of him. It was an amazing thing to believe, but it was true. Instead of being proud of those eggs as most birds of Peter's acquaintance would have been in Big Tom's place, he actually was jealous of them. There was no doubt about it. Right then and there, Peter lost all sympathy for Big Tom's lonesomeness.

"I think I'll be going," said he abruptly, and without even saving goodbye, he scampered off, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

"The idea!" he exclaimed to himself. "The very idea of being jealous of his own eggs and wanting to break them! I never heard of such a thing. He ought to be ashamed of himself. It serves him right if he is lonesome. He deserves to be. I wonder where Mrs. Gobbler has hidden her nest."

STORY 1745. September 14, 1917

Peter Rabbit's Accidental Discovery

You'll find as on through life you go
And hidden things you seek to know—
Things vainly looked for in the past—
You'll find by accident at last.

It always has been so, and it always will be so. Some of the most wonderful things in all the world have been discovered wholly by accident. Peter Rabbit, with his ever-present curiosity, has wasted no end of time trying to find out things just to gratify that curiosity and then by accident has discovered what he wanted to know. In fact, he has found out more things by accident than ever he has by the use of his wits.

When he left Big Tom, there nothing but indignant amazement in Peter's funny little head—amazement that Big Tom actually was jealous of his own eggs. But Peter hadn't gone far before he began to wonder where Mrs. Gobbler could have hidden that nest so cleverly that Big Tom couldn't find it. The more he wondered the more he wanted to know. Curiosity was once more taking possession of Peter Rabbit. Once Peter becomes curious, he has no peace until that curiosity has been satisfied, and it was just so now. He no more went over to the Green Forest to try to cheer Big Tom and keep him from being lonesome, but he went to the Green Forest every day just the same.

He came to look for Mrs. Gobbler and her hidden nest. But though he looked here and looked there, looked in every likely place he could think of, and a great many unlikely places, he failed to find them. It seemed to Peter as if Mrs. Gobbler had simply ceased to be. Finally, he gave up looking for her. He began to realize that it was pure waste of time.

Little by little as other things interested him he forgot about Mrs. Gobbler and her hidden nest. One day as he was scampering along through a part of the Green Forest he often visited, he caught a glimpse of Old Man Coyote just ahead of him.

“The sooner I get out of sight the better for me,” thought Peter, and dived under a mass of ferns growing around the foot of a great tree. Then he turned and peeped out to watch Old Man Coyote. Old Man Coyote went on about his business and soon was out of sight. Peter breathed easier and settled down to wait for Old Man Coyote to get so far away that there would be no danger of catching up with him.

Peter had sat there only a few minutes when he began to have the uncomfortable feeling that he was not alone. He had seen nothing and heard nothing to make him feel this way, but he couldn’t get rid of the feeling. He stirred uneasily. Finally, he turned his head and looked behind him.

At first he saw nothing but the ferns all around. Then all in a flash he did see something. He saw two eyes, two sharp eyes fixed on him. Peter’s heart gave a great jump, and he prepared to give a great jump himself if need be. Then as he stared and stared, he made out the head in which those two eyes were located. It was the head of Mrs. Gobbler. Yes, sir, it was the head of Mrs. Gobbler. Peter knew that instantly, for there is no other head like hers. Wholly by accident he had discovered Mrs. Gobbler’s hiding place.

STORY 1746. September 15, 1917

Peter Promises to be Good

“Quit, quit,” said Mrs. Gobbler in a very low voice as she saw that Peter was preparing to run away. “Quit, quit, Peter Rabbit, I want to talk to you. Sit down.”

Peter sat down. The truth is he didn’t dare do otherwise. There was a look in Mrs. Gobbler’s eyes and a tone to her voice that made him decide right on the instant that the wisest thing for him to do was to obey.

“I—I—I beg your pardon,” said Peter, a little breathlessly. “I didn’t know you were in here. I didn’t, Mrs. Gobbler. Truly I didn’t.”

“Of course you didn’t,” replied Mrs. Gobbler rather grimly. “No one knew where I am until you came blundering in here. No one but you knows it now. I don’t intend that anybody else shall know it.”

She snapped her eyes in a way that made Peter very uncomfortable. He wished that he dared run, but he didn’t dare. You see, he knew that Mrs. Gobbler has a long neck and he knew that he was within reach of her stout bill. So he wisely sat still.

“Why did you come in here?” she snapped.

“To hide from Old Man Coyote,” replied Peter meekly and truthfully. “I saw him ahead of me just as I got opposite here.”

“That’s one reason I want to have an understanding with you, Peter Rabbit. Do you know what I am doing here?”

“I can guess,” replied Peter in a small voice, for he still felt uneasy.

“Well, go ahead and guess,” retorted Mrs. Gobbler sharply.

"You are sitting on a nestful of eggs," replied Peter, although he could see nothing of the nest because Mrs. Gobbler quite covered it.

"Right. Quite right," agreed Mrs. Gobbler. "That is exactly what I am doing, and it is what I want to continue to do in peace of mind until those eggs hatch. Now listen to me, Peter Rabbit. You have got, to promise to be good. You have got to promise not to tell a single soul—not one."

She said this so fiercely that Peter actually ducked his head.

"I promise," he said hastily. "I promise not to tell a single soul, not even Big Tom, though you've no idea how lonesome and quite out of sorts he is."

"It will do him good," retorted Mrs. Gobbler, tartly. "He is the last person in the wide world that I want to know where this nest is. He would smash every one of these precious eggs if he should find them. He is too jealous to live with for the present, but he'll get over it after a while. Now I want you to promise on your honor that you won't tell anyone that you know where I am and also that you will keep away from here yourself. You are not to come here again no matter what happens. Do you understand?"

"Yes," replied Peter, meekly. He hesitated a minute. Then he asked timidly, "Won't you let me see those eggs of yours, Mrs. Gobbler? I think I can keep your secret better if I have the memory of those eggs to help me."

Mrs. Gobbler grinned. She was right on the point of refusing, but Peter looked so wistful that she didn't. Instead she got up and stepped aside. Peter gasped. There before him at the foot of the great tree were twelve great eggs, the largest eggs Peter had ever seen. They were a pale cream buff finely and evenly speckled.

"Oh!" cried Peter.

"Aren't they lovely?" asked Mrs. Gobbler, looking at them with eyes shining with pride.

STORY 1747. September 17, 1917

Peter Rabbit Fights Temptation

The hardest fights of all to win
Are those that must be fought within.

When at last Peter Rabbit slipped out from among the ferns clustered about the foot of the great tree in the Green Forest where he had accidentally found Mrs. Gobbler and her nest, he first made sure that the way was wholly clear. Left to himself Peter probably would have simply looked this way and that hastily and then gone on about his business if the way seemed clear. But Peter wasn't left to himself. On her nest right behind him was Mrs. Gobbler, and she would take no risks. She insisted that Peter should look very carefully this way and very carefully that way and very carefully the other way before he left the shelter of those thick growing ferns.

"It isn't just for enemies you must look, but for friends as well," she warned him.

Illustrations. September 10 to September 15, 1917.

1741. Reddy Fox Shows His True Self
"As sure as my name is Reddy Fox, I'll get you."

1742. Big Tom Becomes Lonesome
Peter never tired of watching Big Tom strut.

1743. Big Tom is in a Bad Humor
"Good morning, Big Tom," said Peter. "I've got some news for you."

1744. Big Tom's Jealousy
"I suppose she is afraid I would break the eggs," said he at last.

1745. Peter Rabbit's Accidental Discovery
Then he turned and peeped out to watch Old Man Coyote.

1746. Peter Promises to be Good
"Why did you come in here?" she snapped.

“Friends sometimes are more dangerous than enemies. You must make sure that no one sees you leave here. If same well-meaning friend should happen to see you leave here, they might take a notion to look in here to find out what you were doing here, and then my secret would be out.”

So Peter made sure that there wasn’t a soul near, and then he said goodbye and started forth. “Remember your promise!” hissed Mrs. Gobbler as Peter scampered away.

Now Peter had made a double promise, as you remember. That is, it was a promise with two parts. First, he wasn’t to tell a single soul about that nest; second, he wasn’t to visit it again himself.

It was easy enough to make that promise. It always is easy to make a promise. You know that. But keeping that promise was a very different matter. He wanted to tell Mrs. Peter. He wanted to tell everyone he met. He felt that it was something to boast about. He, Peter Rabbit, had found what no one else in all the Green Forest had found, and yet because of his promise, he couldn’t brag even a little. It was very hard, very hard indeed.

The first time after that that he met Big Tom, he almost forgot. It was right on the tip of his tongue to say, “I know where Mrs. Gobbler is!” Then just in time he remembered, and instead of stopping as usual for a chat with Big Tom he turned about and scampered away as fast as he could, lipperty-lipperty-lip.

Big Tom thought that Peter was running away from him, but he wasn’t. He was running away from temptation. You see, it was a very great temptation to brag to Big Tom that he, Peter, had found out that which Big Tom so much desired to know, and hadn’t been able to find out.

Then there was Sammy Jay. Sammy is so clever at finding out things about other people’s affairs that it was the very hardest kind of hard work for Peter not to boast to Sammy about having found something that Sammy hadn’t. But hard as all this was, it was still harder not to visit that place where Mrs. Gobbler and her nest were so well hidden.

Peter wanted to know how things were coming on. He wanted to know when Mrs. Gobbler expected those eggs to hatch. He wanted to know a lot of things. Several times he found himself over by that clump of ferns at the foot of the great tree, and just in time remembered his promise. On each occasion he scampered past as fast as he could, lipperty-lipperty-lip. You see, Peter’s way of fighting temptation is to run away from it. That usually is the best way if you are not strong enough to face it and overcome it. And so he faithfully kept Mrs. Gobbler’s secret.

STORY 1748. September 18, 1917

Peter Gets his Reward

Who faithful is in thought and deed.

In matters great or matters small
Will find the sense of honor kept
Is quite the best reward of all.

Peter Rabbit kept his promise to Mrs. Gobbler. It was hard work, but he kept it. No one, not even little Mrs. Peter, got so much as a hint of what Peter knew. Neither did he once stop to so much as peek in among the ferns about the foot of the great tree in the Green Forest where Mrs. Gobbler and her nest were hidden. More than once Mrs. Gobbler heard him scurry past, and smiled as she listened to the patter of his feet. So the days slipped past into a week, and the week slipped past into three weeks, and then one morning as Peter was hurrying past the hiding place, with just a side-long glance at it, a low "Quit, quit," made him stop short and sit up.

"Quit, quit, come in here, Peter Rabbit," said the voice, and Peter knew it for the voice of Mrs. Gobbler.

Peter needed no second invitation. He crept in among the ferns. Mrs. Gobbler was sitting on her nest just as he had last seen her. As soon as Peter was near enough to see she stood up, and as he had once done before, Peter gasped. Instead of 12 speckled eggs there were 12 downy little birds. "Aren't they the most beautiful babies you ever saw?" demanded Mrs. Gobbler, her eyes shining with loving pride.

Of course, Peter couldn't admit that they were more beautiful than his own, for you know all mothers and fathers think their own babies the most beautiful babies in all the world, but he hastened to say that they were indeed beautiful.

"You are the very first one to see them," declared Mrs. Gobbler, "and that is because you kept my secret. It is a sort of reward, you know."

"And a very nice reward it is," replied Peter. "It must be nice to have your worries at an end."

"My worries at an end!" exclaimed Mrs. Gobbler. "What are you talking about, Peter Rabbit? My worries have only just begun. That reminds me that you must make another promise, Peter. "You must promise not to even hint that I have any babies. You must try to forget that there is such a person in the Green Forest as myself. It is going to be a thousand times harder to keep folks from knowing about these lively youngsters than ever it was to keep my nest a secret."

"Can't I even tell Mr. Gobbler?" asked Peter innocently.

"My goodness, no!" exclaimed Mrs. Gobbler in alarm. "He would be even more jealous than he would have been if he had found my eggs in spite of the fact that these are his own children. He mustn't find them until they are at least half grown. Big Tom has his good points, or I would not be as fond of him as I am, but I am sorry to say he is a poor father. I called you in so that you might see these darlings, because we shall leave here today, and not come back."

"Where are you going?" asked Peter, his eyes wide with surprise.

"That's telling," replied Mrs. Gobbler, with a grin. "We are going where we can

find food for these little scamps, and that's all I am going to tell you. Do I have your promise not to say a word?"

"Yes," replied Peter promptly.

"Thank you," replied Mrs. Gobbler. "Now suppose you run along like the good fellow you are."

There was nothing more to be said, so Peter took a last look at the tiny Gobblers and went on about his business. He felt that he had been rewarded for keeping his promise by this one glimpse of Mrs. Gobbler's family, but the best reward was the feeling that he had been true to his given word.

STORY 1749. September 19, 1917

Mrs. Gobbler's Worries

Probably in all the Green Forest there was no prouder mother than Mrs. Gobbler as she started forth from the snug retreat among the ferns at the foot of a great tree where she spent so many days safely hidden while she sat on her eggs. It seemed a pity, a very great pity, to leave a hiding place which had proven so good, but a hiding place that would do for a nest with a dozen eggs and a wise old bird who could keep perfectly still wouldn't do at all for 12 downy babies who were naturally lively, and who must run about while they were awake to make their legs strong, and who must be where they could have plenty to eat.

So while Mrs. Gobbler was a very proud mother, she was a very anxious mother as she led her little flock out from among the sheltering green ferns. Probably no other mother in the Green Forest, unless it was Mrs. Grouse, was quite so anxious as she, or had as much cause to be. Her feathered neighbors who nested in trees often had a great deal to say about their worries while their children were growing up. Mrs. Gobbler would listen politely, but to herself she would say "Humph! They don't know what real worries are. They think they do, but they don't. In the first place, there are few of them who have more than four babies to think of at a time, while I have 12. In the second place their babies are comparatively safe in their nests until they are ready to fly. There are only a few enemies who can get them there, even if the nest is discovered.

"Now my babies, bless their little hearts, are on the ground in danger from every enemy that runs, flies or crawls. I have got to watch out for Reddy Fox and Old Man Coyote and Billy Mink and Shadow the Weasel and Jimmy Skunk and Redtail the Hawk and Hooty the Owl and Blacky the Crow. Worse still, I have got to watch out for their own father for a while, because he is so dreadfully jealous,

Those tree-nesters can leave their youngsters while they hunt for food, but I must take mine with me with the constant risk of meeting one of our enemies. It is always more dangerous traveling about than staying in one place. All the time I've got to keep my eyes and ears wide open for signs of danger, and at the same time have got to look for food and keep watch of 12 of the liveliest little scamps on earth.

“Then, too, they are such delicate little things. I do hope we shall have no heavy rains until they are well grown. Dampness is one of the worst things in the world for them, and not being able to keep off the ground, they cannot get away from the dampness at all if it is long continued, and they are likely to catch cold and sicken and die. Mercy me, did ever a mother have so many worries as I have,”

As they left the sheltering green ferns, Mrs. Gobbler counted her brood to make sure that all were there. Then she gave them her danger signal and told them that whenever they heard that each one was to squat down right where he or she happened to be, and keep absolutely still, no matter what happened, until they heard the signal that all was well.

She told them that when she called them to her, they must come at once as fast as their little legs could bring them, not stopping a second for anything, and that failure to obey might cost them their lives. She told them of all the dreadful things that might happen if they forgot and failed to obey instantly. Then when she though they were sufficiently frightened she started on in search of a breakfast for them, and you may be sure that the 12 downy little babies kept close at Mother Gobbler’s heels.

STORY 1750. September 20, 1917

The First Alarm

In all the Green Forest there was no prettier sight than Mrs. Gobbler and her 12 downy babies as they started forth in search of a breakfast. And in all the Green Forest there was no prouder mother and no more anxious one than Mrs. Gobbler. She walked slowly because, of course, those little legs scurrying along after her couldn’t have kept up if she hadn’t. She turned her head from side to side, her keen eyes searching everywhere to make sure that no danger threatened. Her keen ears caught every teeniest, weeniest sound. Often she would pause to make sure that the faint rustle of the Merry Little Breezes among the leaves of the tree-tops was not made by some soft-footed enemy.

Presently they came to an ant-hill. Mrs. Gobbler made sure that no danger was near and then began to scratch open that ant-hill. At once a frightened host of ants was uncovered, and Mrs. Gobbler picked up two or three to show her babies that these were good to eat. At once the 12 little Gobblers began to snap up the ants greedily. They ran this way and that way, their funny little heads bobbing up and down as they picked up and swallowed the frightened ants. Such a feast and such a good time as they did have!

When there were no more ants to be found, Mrs. Gobbler clucked softly, and once more the little procession started on through the Green Forest, and Jolly, round, smiling Mr. Sun smiled more broadly than ever as he looked down and saw them.

Where an old log had rotted away to nothing but a crumbling mass, Mrs. Gobbler scratched vigorously with her big feet and presently uncovered some fat white grubs. How those 12 babies did scramble for these! They were even better than the ants, and in almost no time at all the very last one had disappeared, and one little unfortunate

who had not been as quick as his brothers and sisters peeped disconsolately because he had not had a taste.

So they moved on slowly, Mrs. Gobbler scratching up a worm here, a grub there, watching with pride and delight the struggle of the babies for possession of it. But not for an instant did she forget to keep watch with her eyes and guard with her ears for possible danger. From long experience she knew only too well that danger often is nearest when all seems safest.

They were just on the edge of a little opening when Mrs. Gobbler caught sight of a speck high in the sky. She knew in an instant who it was. It was Redtail the Hawk.

"Quit! Quit!" called Mrs. Gobbler sharply and crouched down. Instantly her 12 babies scampered to her and crept under her protecting wings. Round and round in smaller and smaller circles sailed Redtail, coming lower and lower that he might better scan every foot of space in that little opening. He saw what looked like a little heap of brown leaves. It didn't move, and with a whistle of disappointment he flew away. Mrs. Gobbler didn't move until she was sure that he was quite beyond sight. Then, with a little sigh of thankfulness, she stood up. It was the first alarm, and her babies had obeyed promptly. They had done just what she had told them to, and so all was well.

STORY 1751. September 21, 1917

A Grasshopper Feast

Little by little Mrs. Gobbler led her brood to the edge of the Green Forest, where it is joined by the Green Meadows. She knew that there was increased danger there, but growing babies must have the very best of food, and there is no food for young turkeys like plenty of grasshoppers, and grasshoppers live on the Green Meadows and not in the Green Forest. So Mrs. Gobbler decided that she must risk the dangers in order that her precious babies might have plenty of the best kind of food.

The night was spent in the shelter of a pile of brush, the 12 babies sleeping safely tucked under their mother. Mrs. Gobbler slept, too, but not soundly. At the least little sound she was wide awake. A Green Forest mother cannot afford to sleep soundly when she has precious babies to keep guard over. Once she heard the soft steps of Reddy Fox approaching, and she held her breath. He passed the heap of brush, then he turned back to sniff at the edge of it, and Mrs. Gobbler's heart almost stopped beating. But not a breath of air was stirring, and she had pressed all her feathers close to her body so that there was no tell-tale scent. Reddy sniffed a couple of times and went on, never dreaming how close he had been to such a dinner as he often dreamed of but never yet tasted.

Mrs. Gobbler had chosen that hiding place close to the edge of the Green Forest so that they might be on the Green Meadows at the first hint of day. She knew that that would be the safest time for them to be out in the open because most of her enemies, who hunt by night, would have given up hunting by that time. The weather had been very, very dry, which meant that there should be plenty of grasshoppers.

So it was that when folly, round, bright Mr. Sun had climbed high enough in the blue, blue sky to get his first glimpse of the Green Meadows almost the first thing he saw was Mrs. Gobbler keeping watch and guard while 12 greedy little Gobblers were true to their name and were gobbling up grasshoppers as fast as ever they could.

They snapped the funny long-legged insects off the grass. They caught them on the ground before they could jump. They ran this way and that way and the other way with no thought of anything but the feast they were having.

But when Mother Gobbler's sharp eyes spied a speck in the sky, which she instantly knew to be Redtail the Hawk, starting out to look for his own breakfast, and she crouched down very close to the earth calling sharply "Quit! Quit!" every one of her brood instantly stopped hunting and scurried under her sheltering wings and wondered what it was all about. Not one failed to mind her instantly, in spite of the temptation to catch just one more delicious grasshopper.

When Redtail had disappeared, Mother Gobbler gave them the signal that all was well, and once more the fun began. Such a feast as it was! It wasn't long before every little crop was stuffed until it couldn't hold another grasshopper. One greedy youngster even had a leg of a particularly big grasshopper hanging from a corner of his mouth because he couldn't get the whole down. Then Mrs. Gobbler led the way back to the Green Forest, and creeping under some brush gathered them under her wings to rest, while she talked to them softly and told them the things that a wise Turkey must learn.

STORY 1752. September 22, 1917

Mrs. Gobbler Fools Reddy Fox

With plenty of grasshoppers to eat, not to mention other things in the way of worms and bugs, the tiny Gobblers grew very fast. Feathers began to take the place of down, and they were no longer pretty, but were ungainly, for their necks and their legs seemed to grow faster than the rest of them. The bigger they grew the more anxious became Mrs. Gobbler, for they were no longer so easily hidden as when they were tiny.

So all went well, with nothing worse than an occasional scare, until one morning when the brood was rather widely scattered in the grass Mrs. Gobbler's sharp eyes discovered Reddy Fox running along the edge of the Green Forest with his nose to the ground.

She saw him reach the place where they had left the Green Forest to come out on the Green Meadows, and she saw him stop and sniff eagerly, then turn in their direction. He had caught the scent of their tracks.

Instantly Mrs. Gobbler gave the danger signal, which meant "Lie flat and don't move." Reddy heard it and looked up just in time to see Mrs. Gobbler crouch down in the grass. Instantly he crouched himself, and then began to steal forward swiftly, but carefully. Just as he was almost within jumping distance, and was sure that at last he was to have that turkey dinner he had so often dreamed of, Mrs. Gobbler jumped to her feet and began to run with one wing dragging, as if broken. Reddy bounded after her.

Illustrations. September 17 to September 22, 1917.

1747. Peter Rabbit Fights Temptation
"Remember your promise!" hissed Mrs. Gobbler as Peter scampered out.

1748. Peter Gets his Reward
Instead of twelve speckled eggs, there were twelve downy little birds.

1749. Mrs. Gobbler's Worries
It seemed a pity to leave a hiding place which had proven so good.

1750. The First Alarm
They were just on the edge of a little opening when Mrs. Gobbler caught sight of a speck high in the air.

1751. A Grasshopper Feast
It wasn't very long before every little crop was filled until it couldn't hold another grasshopper.

1752. Mrs. Gobbler Fools Reddy Fox
He knew it was of no use to follow Mrs. Gobbler now.

Now Mrs. Gobbler can run very fast, very fast indeed, and Reddy found that he had got to run his very best if he would catch her. Once in a while he almost had her, she would fly a few feet, and then drop back on the ground, as if that wing which hung down had not strength enough to support her in the air. Gradually she turned, so as to head for the Green Forest, and in a few minutes, she was in among the trees. Several times Reddy thought that surely he had her, but each time she managed to flop just out of reach. It was exciting. It was the most exciting hunt Reddy could remember.

His mouth watered and he ran harder than ever.

Mrs. Gobbler dodged behind trees and around brush, and all the time she led Reddy farther and farther into the Green Forest. At last, when they were far enough in to suit her purpose. Mrs. Gobbler ran a few steps faster than ever, and then suddenly spread her wings and sailed away over the treetops toward the place deep in the Green Forest where Reddy had first made her acquaintance early in the Spring.

There was nothing the matter with her wing now, and with a very, very foolish feeling Reddy realized that there hadn't been anything the matter with it before.

She had been fooling him, that was all. If ever a Fox felt foolish Reddy was that Fox. He snarled angrily, and vowed, as he often had vowed before, that he would yet catch one of those Gobblers. He knew it was of no use to follow Mrs. Gobbler now, so in disgust he turned and trotted away in the direction of his home in the Old Pasture. He had no heart to hunt more that day.

STORY 1753. September 24, 1917

Reddy Fox Thinks Too Late

The trouble with most of us, often you'll find,
Is that in much of our thinking we are rather behind.

It is a lot easier to think when it is too late what we should or should not have done than it is to think ahead. Just take the case of Reddy Fox. When he discovered that Mrs. Gobbler had been fooling him, and that she had led him deep into the Green Forest, only to fly away to safety, just as he was sure he was to catch her, he was so angry that he had no room for anything but anger in his mind. So he started off home as disgusted as any Fox ever was.

But as he trotted along, he had time to think. It suddenly popped into his head that it was queer that Mrs. Gobbler hadn't flown away in the first place when he found her out on the Green Meadows. Why had she pretended to have something the matter with one of her wings? Why, indeed? Why had she run along just barely out of his reach so far into the Green Forest, only to spread her big wings and fly away at last?

Reddy stopped abruptly as these thoughts came into his head. He stopped and stared back, in the direction in which Mrs. Gobbler had disappeared and he drew his lips back in an ugly snarl that showed all his teeth and was not at all pleasant to see.

"Reddy Fox," said he, under his breath, "you are as stupid as a young cub just

starting out in the Great World. Mrs. Gobbler has got a family as sure as you live, and that family was right out there on the Green Meadows all the time. She was pretending just to get you away from there. If she had been alone, she never, never would have acted in any such way as that. Why didn't you do a little thinking sooner? If you had you might have had a feast of tender young Gobblers, just as well as not. Perhaps it isn't too late even now."

Reddy turned in the direction of the place on the Green Meadows where he had seen Mrs. Gobbler, and how he did run! He ran as only Reddy can when he is in a hurry. He was quite out of breath when he reached the place where he had first seen Mrs. Gobbler that morning. He was so out of breath that he panted. Cautiously he peeped out from behind some bushes. There was no sign of Mrs. Gobbler.

Reddy put his nose to the ground and ran this way and that way. He found the scent of Mrs. Gobbler, where she had walked, but he paid no attention to it. He ran this way and that way and presently he found the scent of other feet, smaller feet, and his nose told him that it had been left by the feet of little Gobblers.

This way and that way all about Reddy raced with his nose to the ground and everywhere he caught that delicious scent, but nowhere did he find a single young Gobbler. Presently he came to a place where the scent was strong, for many little feet had passed that way. Reddy followed straight to the edge of the Green Forest.

He knew then that he was too late. He knew that while he had been trotting toward home in anger and disgust Mrs. Gobbler had returned and had led her brood to safety. He had done his thinking too late. If Reddy had been angry before, just imagine how filled with rage he was now. And the worst of it all was he had no one to blame but himself. He was so upset that this time he did go home. He felt in no condition to hunt any more that morning. He, Reddy Fox, one of the smartest of all the Green Meadow and Green Forest people, had been fooled completely!

STORY 1754. September 25, 1917

The Wisdom of Mrs. Gobbler

Everything had happened just as Reddy Fox had guessed. No sooner had he started for home in a rage after his failure to catch Mrs. Gobbler than she had made a wide circle and hurried back to the Green Meadows, where she had left her precious brood. As she hurried out from the edge of the Green Forest her eyes glistened with pride. Though she looked this way and looked that way, not a sign of a young gobbler was to be seen. It was as if she was the only living creature anywhere about. Her children had minded her absolutely.

"Quit, quit," she called softly.

Instantly 12 homely, half-grown youngsters appeared as if by magic. Swiftly she counted them. All were there. Each one had flattened himself or herself down in the grass at her alarm when Reddy Fox had first appeared and not one had moved since. Mrs. Gobbler wasted no time.

“Hurry!” she said, sharply, as she led the way back to the Green Forest. “That Fox may wake up and suspect the trick I played on him. If he does, he will be sure to come back here.”

So the 12 youngsters hurried after Mrs. Gobbler as she led the way into the Green Forest; not one lagged behind. Straight to one of their safest secret hiding places she led them and not until then did she breathe easily. There she told them, as she had often told them before, of the dangers that surrounded them and of the need of instant and absolute obedience. And because they had just seen for themselves how obedience had saved their lives, each resolved always in the future to obey absolutely. And each was filled with great admiration for their mother because of the clever way she had fooled Reddy Fox.

“This will be the last of the grasshoppers for a while any way,” said Mrs. Gobbler. “That Fox will hang around the Green Meadows most of the time now and I wouldn’t be able to fool him again that way. We must go somewhere else now for our food. You children are big enough for other food now and can eat seeds and berries and things like that. So we will keep away from the Green Meadow and hunt for our food where Reddy Fox will not be likely to look for us.”

So late that afternoon Mrs. Gobbler led her brood through the Green Forest over to the edge of the Old Pasture, where there were many seeds and berries, and to their delight the youngsters found that they could eat this food and it was quite as delicious as grasshoppers. And while Mrs. Gobbler kept watch they filled their crops until they would hold no more.

Meanwhile Reddy Fox was doing what wise Mrs. Gobbler had expected he would do. He had gone back to the Green Meadows and, securely hidden, was watching and hoping for the young Gobblers to appear. The next day and the next day he did the same thing. He spent most of his time hanging around the edge of the Green Meadows, sure that sooner or later Mrs. Gobbler and her brood would come back. And all the time Mrs. Gobbler was leading her children to other feeding places, never twice to the same place lest it should have been discovered by Reddy Fox.

STORY 1755. September 26, 1917

The Young Gobblers Meet their Father

“Dear me, what a care children are,” said Mrs. Gobbler to herself as she watched her 12 half-grown youngsters eagerly searching for seeds and gobbling up any stray bugs or worms they discovered meanwhile.

“I thought them a great care when they were very little and quite helpless. I thought I had worries then, but I declare the older those scamps get the more cause I have to worry. When they were little, I could gather them under my wings. Also, I could be sure that they would do exactly as I told them to. Now they are getting headstrong and are beginning to think they know all there is to know. I never have a minute’s peace for fear one of them will do something foolish or careless, and as a

result something dreadful will happen. Here they are big enough and able to fly up in the trees and they cause me more anxiety than they did when they were just out of their shells. I think it is about time their father took charge of them."

The more Mrs. Gobbler thought this over the more she felt the need of Big Tom Gobbler's assistance. You remember she had run away from Big Tom in the Spring and had hidden her nest through jealousy. For the same reason so that he might not break the eggs she had kept out of his way ever since, fearing that while the children were little, he might do them some harm in one of his jealous fits. But now the youngsters were so big she no longer feared this. Besides she suspected that by this time Big Tom must be so lonesome that he would no longer give way to fits of jealousy. In this she was quite right.

Now, while all this time Big Tom had seen nothing of her or of the children, though he often had found their tracks, Mrs. Gobbler had seen him frequently and she knew all about his daily habits and just where he was likely to be found morning, noon or night. So, having made up her mind that it was high time that Big Tom should relieve her of some of her cares, she called her children about her, told them to follow her, and led the way to a certain place in the Green Forest where she felt sure Big Tom was at that hour.

Ar she approached the place she appeared not to have the least idea that any one was about. In fact, she seemed to have no thought but to pick up any bits of food that might be about. Fol lowing her example the young Gobblers ran this way and that, snapping up a seed here or a worm there. And then, suddenly, right before them was the most magnificent bird they ever had seen. It was Big Tom, and he had swelled himself out as only Big Tom can.

"Gobble, gobble!" said he, and all the youngsters scurried to their mother and crowded behind her while they stared with round-eyed wonder.

"Quit, quit," replied Mrs. Gobbler, mildly. "What do you think of your family, my dear? I haven't lost one."

Big Tom got red in the face with indignation at the remembrance of how Mrs. Gobbler had run away from him, then decided it would be better not to show his temper lest she should do the same thing again. So for a few minutes he said nothing but strutted with all his might to properly impress on Mrs. Gobbler, and especially on the youngsters, a sense of his importance.

"This, children, is your father," said Mrs. Gobbler in a low voice as she watched Big Tom with admiring eyes. And all the little Gobblers gazed with admiring eyes, too.

STORY 1756. September 27, 1917

Big Tom Heads his Family

At first Big Tom took no notice of his big family of 12 half-grown youngsters beyond strutting a little and showing off for their benefit. They stood in considerable

awe of him, but they still looked to their mother for advice and example. But little by little they found that Mrs. Gobbler looked to Big Tom as the leader. Wherever he went she went. She was as anxious to stay with him now as she had been to keep out of his way before. So the 12 young Gobblers began to imitate Big Tom and to look to him for the knowledge of the ways of the Green Forest which before they had looked to their mother for. In short, Big Tom was the head of the family, and to have seen him you would have supposed that he always had been.

Now, as you know, Big Tom was very wise and smart. If he hadn't been he never could have lived to be so big and wonderful. Right down in his heart he was very, very proud of his big family. Living alone so long had quite cured him of all jealousy. So now he watched over them with all the cunning that his long experience had given him. When they went forth to feed it was Big Tom who was constantly on guard. It was he who picked out the place where they should roost at night, who was the last to close his eyes, and the next morning the first to open them. It was he who insisted that now that they could fly a little, the young Gobblers should always roost in a tree at night, and made it his particular business to see to it that every one of them was off the ground before he himself flew up.

Having lived on the ground altogether up to the time that they began to fly, the youngsters at first did not take kindly to perching all night in a tree.

"Clinging to a branch this way makes my toes ache," complained one.

"I don't see any sense in it," declared another. "We were safe enough down on the ground when we were little and helpless and now that we are big enough to know danger when we see it and to take care of ourselves we must spend each night in a tree. I don't like it."

Big Tom had overheard this. Very red in the face and puffing angrily, he marched over to the two foolish little Gobblers and looked at them so fiercely that their hearts went pit-a-pat, pit-a- pat, with fright, and they wished with all their might that they had kept their tongues still.

The next time I hear anybody saying such foolish things, whoever it is will go out to shift for himself in the Great World," said he, angrily. "When you were little, you slept on the ground and were safe. Why? Because your mother gathered you under her wing and protected you. That's why. Now you are too big for that, very much too big, and there are so many of you that if you should continue to sleep on the ground it would be only a matter of time when Reddy Fox or Old Man Coyote would find you. Or perhaps it would be Billy Mink or Shadow the Weasel.

"In the daytime you are safe enough on the ground, provided you use the senses Old Mother Nature has given you and don't grow heedless or careless. But it is wholly a different matter at night. In a tree you are safe from all but Hooty the Owl, and you are safe from him if you roost in the right kind of a place and keep still. Now, as long as I am head of this family there is to be no more such talk as I have just heard. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir," replied the two little Gobblers meekly.

STORY 1757. September 28, 1917

Hooty the Owl Overhears Reddy Fox Talking

Hooty the Owl was one of the very last of all the Green Forest folk to learn of the presence of Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler in the Green Forest. This was partly because he sleeps the greater part of the day and so had no chance to see the Gobblers; they went to roost before he was abroad. And it was partly because he has no friends to gossip with that Hooty the Owl is left severely alone by his neighbors.

So Hooty knew nothing about the Gobblers until the young ones were more than half grown, and then it was quite by accident that he found out about them. It was just a little before shadow-time one afternoon that Hooty sat in a certain tall tree deep in the Green Forest impatiently waiting for it to grow dark enough for him to begin hunting. As he sat there, watching and waiting, who should come along but Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy, and as luck would have it they stopped right under the very tree in which Hooty was sitting. They didn't know this. Of course not.

"Do you really think that those Gobblers can be way over here?" asked Mrs. Reddy.

"They are as likely to be somewhere about here as anywhere else," replied Reddy. "We've looked in all the likely places, and the chances are that we will find them in some unlikely place if we find them at all. I wouldn't have believed that any birds as big as the Gobblers could have raised a family of 12 on the ground without furnishing us at least one good dinner."

Hooty pricked up his ears. This was very interesting. He didn't know who the Gobblers might be, but they were birds, and Reddy and Mrs. Reddy thought them worth spending a great deal of time to catch. This was enough for him. He would do a little hunting for those Gobblers himself.

They certainly are smart," said Mrs. Reddy.

"You mean that they are lucky," growled Reddy, who couldn't bear to admit that he had been outwitted.

"Have you seen them lately?" asked Mrs. Reddy.

"I caught a glimpse of them yesterday," replied Reddy. "Those youngsters are as big as Farmer Brown's hens now. One apiece would make us a feast. The trouble is they have learned to fly, and every day lessens our chances of catching one. Come on, they'll be going to roost soon."

Reddy and Mrs. Reddy trotted out of sight and Hooty snapped his bill with impatience for the coming of the Black Shadows. "Big as Farmer Brown's hens," he muttered to himself. "Decidedly these Gobblers are worth looking for. Let me see, Reddy said that it was almost time for them to go to roost. That must mean that they spend the night in trees. And he said that there are 12 of those youngsters as big as hens. My, my, my! That means 12 good dinners. If Reddy hasn't been able to catch one

of them in daylight, they must be smart. Of course, he can't catch them at night because they roost in trees. This is my chance. What a long time it takes Mr. Sun to go to bed. I wish he would hurry up."

Hooty once more snapped his bill with impatience.

STORY 1758. September 29, 1917

The Hunting of Hooty the Owl

Of the hunters in the Green Forest there is none more fierce or more feared than Hooty the Owl, sometimes called the Great Horned Owl because of two tufts of feathers that stand above his head like horns. He is the largest of the Owl family and so big and strong and fierce that he is known as the Terror of the Night to all the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows.

Redtail the Hawk and all the other Hawks hunt wholly by day, and they depend on their wonderful eyesight. Reddy Fox and Old Man Coyote depend very much on their noses when they are hunting. Of course, their eyes and their ears help out their noses. Hooty the Owl depends on his ears, helped out by his eyes, which are made for seeing when there is not light enough for the eyes of those he hunts to see at all. Also he depends somewhat on his voice to aid his wonderful ears and eyes.

Other hunters hunt silently. They take the greatest pains to make sound. But Hooty uses his voice and this is the way he does it: He sits on the top of a tall, dead tree looking like a part of the tree itself. All about him is the Green Forest wrapped in darkness by the Black Shadows. Suddenly Hooty breaks the silence. "Whooo-hoo-hoo, whooo-hoo!" he hoots, and there is something so fierce and terrifying in the sound that all the little people awakened from their sleep by it, shiver with fear. Then, if one of them near him moves ever so little so as to make the faintest rustle or scratch of claws, Hooty's wonderful ears are sure to catch the sound. In an instant on noiseless wings he is right over the spot, peering with great fierce eyes that will be sure to see the least movement, and ready with great claws to seize the victim. Do you wonder that no one is more feared than Hooty the Owl?

With the coming of the Black Shadows, Hooty started forth to look for the Gobblers he had overheard Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy talking about. As silently as the Black Shadows, he flew this way and that way over the Green Forest, peering down sharply among the trees. Hooty's wings are so made that he can fly without making a sound. This way and that way he flew but saw nothing of the Gobblers. Then as it grew darker, he flew to one of his favorite watch-towers, which was a tall dead tree. Making his voice sound as fierce as he could, which was very fierce, indeed, he hooted, then instantly listened with all his might. A mouse squeaked faintly with fright, and that was his last squeak. But a mouse was but a bite to Hooty. He was after Gobblers, so he tried again. Nothing happened. After a wait he tried a third time without result.

The Hooty flew to another part of the Green Forest and did the same thing. He visited all his favorite watch towers, but it was all in vain. Disappointed, he began to do

Illustrations. September 24 to September 29, 1917.

1753. Reddy Fox Thinks Too Late
"Reddy Fox," said he under his breath, "You are as stupid as a young cub."

1754. The Wisdom of Mrs. Gobbler
He spent most of his time hanging around the edge of the Green Meadows.

1755. The Young Gobblers Meet their Father
"This, children, is your father," said Mrs. Gobbler.

1756. Big Tom Heads his Family
When they went forth to feed it was Big Tom who was constantly on guard.

1757. Hooty the Owl Overhears Reddy Fox Talking
As luck would have it, they stopped right under the very tree in which Hooty the Owl was sitting.

1758. The Hunting of Hooty the Owl
He visited all his favorite watch towers, but it was all in vain.

a little thinking.

"How stupid of me," said he. "Of course those Gobblers have heard me before. They know where I am in the habit of hunting and so they wouldn't go to roost near one of my watch towers. I must try in other places."

So Hooty spread his noiseless wings and flew from place to place in the Green Forest, hooting fiercely from the tops of tall trees whenever the surroundings seemed to promise a hiding place for the Gobblers. And so it came about that just by chance he finally dropped down in the top of the very tree in which the Gobbler family was sleeping.

STORY 1759. October 1, 1917

Too Frightened to Move

What is worse than a fright
In the darkness of night?

I don't know of anything worse, do you? To be wakened from a sound sleep by a terrible noise, and then to be unable to see anything because of the darkness, is enough to make little shivers of fear run all over the bravest. No, sir, I cannot think of anything worse than a fright in the night.

No one knows better than Hooty the Owl how terrible such a fright is and so he makes use of it in his hunting. He uses his fierce, terrible hoot to waken unseen sleepers about him, knowing full well that in their sudden fright they are quite likely to move, and that in moving they are almost sure to make some teeny, weeny sound, the rustle of a leaf, the scratch of claws on bark, or the faintest of frightened cries. His wonderful ears will catch that sound, no matter how faint it is, and in an instant his soundless wings will take him straight to the spot and his great eyes, made for seeing in darkness, will find the unfortunate one. So safety for the little sleepers of the Green Forest lies in not moving so much as a feather or a claw, when suddenly awakened by Hooty's terrible voice.

No one knows this better than Big Tom and Mrs. Gobbler. For themselves they had no fear. They had so often heard Hooty that they were not frightened by his voice, even when awakened from a sound sleep. But they did worry about the young Gobblers. So over and over again they charged the youngsters that if ever they should be awakened by Hooty's voice they must not move, no matter how frightened they were. It happened that several times they were awakened, but always when Hooty was at some distance. This gave them a chance to learn what his voice was like, but always it sent little cold shivers over them and they hoped that they never would hear it any nearer. They were afraid that if they did, they would move in spite of themselves.

Now, on the night that Hooty started out to hunt for the Gobblers it just happened that at last he alighted in the top of the very tree in which the Gobblers were roosting. He didn't know it because between him and them were many branches. They didn't know it because they were fast asleep with their heads tucked under their wings.

For a few minutes Hooty sat listening and watching, but there was nothing to hint that any one was near. Then he hooted.

"Whooo-hoo-hoo, whooo-hoo," rang out his dreadful hunting call.

To every one of those Gobblers it seemed to be in their very ears. Into the midst of pleasant dreams it broke, the most dreadful sound that the young Gobblers ever had heard. Were they frightened? Would you be frightened if someone yelled fiercely in your ear while you were asleep?

They were so frightened that it seemed to them that their hearts stopped beating. Yes, sir; that is just the way it seemed to those young Gobblers. They were so frightened that their very fright saved their lives. That sounds queer, but such things happen. You see they were too frightened to move. They were so frightened by the nearness of that dreadful voice that they couldn't have moved if moving would have saved their lives. As it was it was not moving that saved them. Not being able to move, of course, they made no sound, and Hooty didn't suspect that they were there. Twice more he hooted and then flew away to try somewhere else. The young Gobblers were saved by their own fright, but you may be sure that for the remainder of that night they slept poorly.

STORY 1760. October 2, 1917

Peter Rabbit Ducks

Peter Rabbit sat just beyond the edge of the dear, old Brier-patch watching the Black Shadows creep out from the Purple Hills across the Green Meadows. He was trying to make up his mind whether to go over to the Green Forest or up to the Old Orchard or to visit Farmer Brown's garden. The Black Shadows crept swiftly over the Green Meadows and the first star began to twinkle faintly. Still Peter sat there undecided which way to go. Suddenly something swept close to Peter's head and he caught just a glimpse of something black in the air.

Peter ducked. Then, without wasting any time he darted back to the safety of the dear old Brier-patch.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed a funny, squeaky little voice. "What's the matter, Peter?"

Peter looked up with such a foolish expression on his face to see Flitter the Bat wheeling and doing all sorts of antics in the air just overhead. "Why don't you give a fellow a little warning?" he demanded indignantly. "How was I to know but you were Hooty the Owl?"

Flitter laughed his funny little squeaky laugh again.

"Just imagine poor little me being taken for Hooty the Owl! Ha, ha, ha! That is the best joke ever," he cried.

But Peter couldn't see the joke.

"All I saw was something dark, like a moving shadow," he declared, "and every

time I see anything like that I duck and run. If I hadn't learned to do that Hooty would have had me long ago. It may seem funny to you, but that kind of a scare isn't funny to me. What did you do it for?"

"I didn't mean to scare you; honestly, I didn't," replied Flitter, as he circled and turned and dived in the air as only Flitter can. "I saw a bug flying just over your head and I swooped down to catch him. I didn't once think of frightening you. Peter, I'm sorry I did." Flitter seemed so truly sorry that right away Peter recovered his usual good nature.

"I'll forgive you this time, Flitter," said he, "but don't do it again. It makes me feel jumpy all over. Did you catch the bug?"

"Of course, I caught the bug," replied Flitter. There's another right over your head now. Watch me catch him!" Peter looked up, but he couldn't see any bug. Flitter wheeled, darted down and Peter heard the snap of his jaws. "That was good!" exclaimed Flitter.

"I didn't see anything," replied Peter. "I don't understand how you saw that bug when I couldn't."

Flitter laughed his funny little squeaky laugh again.

"I've heard people talk about being as blind as a bat," said he, "but all I can say is that if anybody is no more blind than I am he is lucky. It takes good eyes to see at this time of day the things I feed on, and don't you forget it!"

"There's no doubt about that, Flitter," replied Peter. "I guess I would starve if I had to depend on my eyes to find food as small as the insects you live on. I never thought of it before, but is that the reason you dart about in such a funny way? And do you get all your food in the air?

STORY 1761. October 3, 1917

Flitter the Bat Gossips About Himself

When Peter Rabbit asked Flitter the Bat if the reason he wheeled and darted about in the air in such a funny way was because he was chasing insects, and if he got all his food in the air, it was from more than mere curiosity. It was from a real desire to learn more about a neighbor whom he had known ever since he could remember and yet of whom he knew next to nothing. He long had meant to ask Flitter about himself and now was a splendid chance.

"Certainly," squeaked Flitter as he swooped just over Peter's head. "Did you think I flew about just for fun? I get all my food in the air and, believe me, Peter Rabbit, it is some work. When you are hungry you can go to a patch of sweet clover and sit in one place until your stomach is full. I have to hunt for and chase every bite I get. I can get only one at a time, and often that one is so small that it is hardly a taste. If I hadn't learned to turn suddenly and wheel and dart and swoop I would have starved to death before now. Let me once get my eyes on a flying insect and it is mine. A good square

meal means a lot of exercise for me, but exercise is good for any one and I guess it is because of it that I always feel so fine."

"Why don't I ever see you in the daytime?" asked Peter.

Flitter chuckled. It was a funny, squeaky little chuckle. He flew down to a branch just above Peter's head and there he hung by his hind feet, head down. "It's easier to talk this way than when I am flying about," he explained.

"You asked me just now why you never see me in daytime," he continued. "That's when I sleep. A fellow as active as I am, and who has to work so hard for a living, needs a lot of sleep, and because I don't like sunlight I sleep all day."

"Why don't you like sunlight?" asked Peter.

"Because it hurts my eyes," retorted Flitter promptly. "Don't for a minute think I cannot see in daytime. A great many people think this, but that is where I fool them. I can see perfectly, but my eyes were made for shadow time and the sun hurts them. So I find a cool, comfortable, dark place and sleep all day. Then when Mr. Sun goes to bed behind the Purple Hills I come out to hunt. Hunting is best at that time. Besides, it is a great deal more comfortable. When it grows too dark to see I rest again and then do a little hunting Just before Mr. Sun gets up in the morning."

"If you please, Flitter, tell me if you always hang head down the way you are now when you are resting," said Peter.

"Of course," replied Flitter promptly. "I wouldn't be comfortable any other way."

"Huh!" grunted Peter. "I don't see how you can be comfortable that way. Do you sleep that way?"

"Certainly. Of course, I don't see how anyone can be comfortable any other way," squeaked Flitter, rather sharply.

Peter scratched his long left ear with his long right hindfoot and then scratched his long right ear with his long left hindfoot.

"What are you doing that for?" demanded Flitter.

"I'm just trying to imagine how it would feel to hang up all day by my heels, and I can't," replied Peter with a grin.

STORY 1762. October 4, 1917

Peter Becomes Better Acquainted with Flitter

Flitter the Bat laughed a funny, squeaky little laugh at the very idea of Peter Rabbit trying to hang by his heels and Peter laughed with him. Yet Flitter himself was doing that very thing. Moreover, he had just told Peter that that is the way he always rests—hanging by his hindfeet, head down. It was this which had prompted Peter to wonder how it would seem to hang that way, Flitter," said Peter, after a little pause. "We've known each other a long time, haven't we?"

“Quite a while, Peter, quite a while,” replied Flitter.

“And yet we are not really acquainted, are we?” continued Peter.

Flitter chuckled and chuckled again. “You may not be very well acquainted with me, Peter,” said he, “but I feel pretty well acquainted with you.”

“I don’t see how you can be any better acquainted with me than I am with you,” protested Peter, looking rather puzzled.

“Think a minute. Stop and think a minute,” retorted Flitter. “You don’t know much about me because you have never seen me before excepting flying about at dusk, and then you have had only glimpses of me. Now, looking down from the air as I do, I see a great deal that is going on on the ground. So I have seen you dozens and dozens and dozens of times when you didn’t suspect it. I have seen you at home in the dear Old Brier Patch. I have watched you on the Green Meadows. I have even followed you into the Green Forest. I know how you eat and sleep and play, who your friends are and whom you fear. I think, Peter, I am pretty well acquainted with you. I could tell you a lot of things about yourself that would surprise you. But how much do you know about me?”

“So little I would be ashamed to tell you,” confessed Peter. “But I want to know more. I want to be really acquainted, but I don’t see how I am going to be unless you will answer a lot of questions and tell me a lot about yourself. Will you?”

Now the eyes of Flitter the Bat are tiny, but tiny as they are they can twinkle and snap. They twinkled and snapped now.

“Don’t you know, Peter Rabbit, that it isn’t at all nice for people to talk about themselves?” he demanded.

Peter saw the twinkle in Flitter’s eyes and a twinkle crept into his own eyes. “I’ve heard something of the kind,” said he, “but the things I hear seldom worry me. If you are so modest that you do not want to talk about yourself why just talk about your family. It isn’t at all fair that you should be so well acquainted with me while I am so little acquainted with you. And there isn’t any way for me to get acquainted unless you will help me. You can follow me and watch me, but I cannot follow you for two seconds, and I really do want to feel acquainted because—” Peter paused.

“Because what?” demanded Flitter. “Because I like you,” Peter blurted out.

Flitter’s little eyes snapped and twinkled in the dusk more than ever. “All right, Peter,” said he. “All true friends should be really and truly acquainted and I guess there is no doubt but you and I are friends. So I’ll tell you everything I can that you want to know in order to feel acquainted.”

So for the next hour Flitter hung by his heels just above Peter’s head and they talked and talked until at last Peter felt that he really and truly was acquainted with Flitter the Bat.

STORY 1763. October 5, 1917

Flitter's Queer Arms and Legs

The things that seem most queer to me
May commonplace to others be.

You see it makes all the difference in the world whether or not we are familiar with things. Did you ever stop to think when you are looking at some animal which seems to you very queer indeed that probably you look just as queer to it? All of us are inclined to call things queer when they are different from things we are familiar with.

It used to strike Peter Rabbit as very queer that Flitter the Bat had wings and could fly when no other animal is so blessed. But Peter saw Flitter flying about so often that he got used to those wings and no longer thought them queer until that evening when he became really acquainted with Flitter. You remember that Flitter had hung himself by his hind feet to a branch just over Peter's head for a little friendly gossip. Presently as he talked, he stretched one wing way out, just as you sometimes stretch your arms. Peter fairly gasped. It was the first time he ever had seen Flitter near enough to really see his arms and legs.

"What's the matter?" squeaked Flitter.

"Nothing, nothing at all," replied Peter, a little sheepishly, "only you have such queer arms and legs."

"I don't see anything queer about them," retorted Flitter: "If you ask me, I think your own are queer. What is queer about mine?"

"Why your fingers are so very, very long. I never heard of such fingers" replied Peter. "And then there is something wrong with your hind legs."

"What is wrong with my hind legs?" snapped Flitter rather sharply. "I never have found anything wrong with them."

"Why, they are turned the wrong way," explained Peter. "At least it looks like the wrong way to me. Your knees bend backward. I don't see how you can walk."

"I don't walk; I fly," Flitter retorted. "How under the sun could I fly if I didn't have long fingers for the skin of my wings to be stretched be- tween? Tell me that, Peter Rabbit."

Peter shook his head. "I guess you couldn't," said he.

"I guess you have guessed just right," replied Flitter. "And if my hind legs were not just as they are, I would be no better off. There isn't a thing queer about them that I can see. If they were any different, they would be queer. Tell me, Peter, how is it that when you run you can take such long jumps?"

"Why, because my hind legs are long and made for jumping," replied Peter wonderingly. "I should think you could see that for yourself."

Flitter grinned.

"Different from the legs of anybody else but Jumper the Hare, and one or two

others, aren't they? Rather queer legs, don't you think?"

"Why, no," replied Peter. "There's nothing queer about them that I can see. If they were not the way they are, I couldn't jump."

"Just so," Flitter retorted. "Just so. Did it never occur to you that those legs of yours probably are just as queer to other folks as mine are to you?"

Peter scratched his head thoughtfully. "I hadn't thought of that," said he. "Perhaps they are."

"Of course they are," replied Flitter. "They were given you so that you can jump. Mine were given me so that I can fly. There's nothing queer when you once understand it."

Flitter stopped talking and took the edge of one wing in his mouth and stretched it as if it were rubber.

STORY 1764. October 6, 1917

Peter Rabbit Becomes Pop-eyed

Peter Rabbit's eyes were popping out of his head as if they actually were trying to jump out and run away. Yes, sir, if you could have seen Peter just then, you certainly would have called him Pop-eyed Peter. He was staring up at Flitter the Bat, who was hanging by his heels from a branch just above Peter's head and who, being a very neat little person, was at that particular moment washing one of his wings.

It wasn't the fact that Flitter was washing himself that made Peter's eyes stick out so. No indeed. Certainly not. Most of Peter's friends wash themselves with their tongues. Peter washes himself that way, when he happens to think of it. I am afraid that this isn't as often as it should be, for Peter is such a happy-go-lucky small person that he isn't always careful of his looks, but he does do it once in a while. So it wasn't the fact that Flitter was washing that made Peter's eyes pop out so with astonishment. It was what Flitter was doing with one of his wings in order to make sure that it was thoroughly clean.

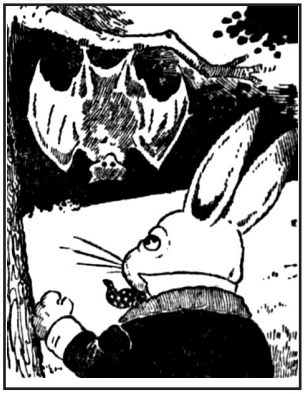
You see it was one of his wings that Flitter was washing. He would take the edge of it in his mouth and pull and stretch it as if it were rubber. He would put it over his head while he washed the underside, and Peter could see the shape of Flitter's head almost as clearly as if there were no wing there. You see that thin substance of which Flitter's wings are made is a lot like very thin rubber and stretches in the same way. So when Flitter pushed his head against it from the underside it just stretched tightly about his head and showed the shape of it. Of course Peter knows nothing about rubber and he never in all his life had seen anything stretch like that. He called it skin, but it is something different from ordinary skin. It is what we call membrane.

Presently Flitter took his head out from under his wing and as he did so he happened to look down at Peter.

Illustrations. October 1 to October 6, 1917.

1759. Too Frightened to Move
Twice he hooted and then flew away to try somewhere else.

1760. Peter Rabbit Ducks
"Why don't you give a fellow a little warning?" Peter demanded indignantly.



1761. Flitter the Bat Gossips About Himself
"If you please, Flitter, tell me if you always hang head down."

1762. Peter Becomes Better Acquainted with Flitter
"Don't you know it isn't at all nice for people to talk about themselves?" Flitter demanded?

1763. Flitter's Queer Arms and Legs
"I don't walk; I fly," Flitter retorted.

1764. Peter Rabbit Becomes Pop-eyed
"Well, what is it?" prompted Flitter.

“My goodness, Peter!” he exclaimed. “If you don’t look out your eyes will jump out of your head! What under the sun is the matter with you?”

Peter grinned. It was a foolish sort of grin, for, to tell the truth, Peter felt rather foolish.

“I—I—” he began and then stopped. You see, he didn’t know just what to say.

“Well, what is it?” prompted Flitter.

“It’s the skin of your wings,” confessed Peter. “I never in all my life have seen anything like it. Doesn’t it hurt when you pull it all out of shape the way you were doing just now?”

Flitter laughed. It was a funny little squeaky laugh. He laughed and laughed. When at last he stopped laughing he found his voice again.

“Bless you, no!” said he. “Of course it doesn’t. You don’t suppose I would pull and stretch it so if it hurt, do you? If I couldn’t pull and stretch it that way I never in the world could keep my wings clean, and that would be dreadful. You see I’ve got a very short neck and if I couldn’t pull and stretch my wings that way I couldn’t get at all parts of them.”

With this, Flitter began on the other wing and Peter watched, his eyes still popping out. It was so astonishing that he couldn’t find another word to say.

STORY 1765. October 8, 1917

Flitter Answers More Questions

Questions wisely put to those who know
Cannot fail to make you wiser grow.

Peter Rabbit learned this long ago. The trouble with Peter is that his questions are not always wisely put. He is very apt to ask a lot of foolish questions just because he doesn’t stop to think. Foolish questions never gain anything for anybody. But Peter’s questions are not always foolish, and by use of his tongue he learns a great deal. It was so now as he gossiped with Flitter the Bat.

What he had learned about Flitter’s arms and legs and wings was only part of what he wanted to know, and he was ready with more questions as soon as Flitter was through washing himself.

“Do you and Mrs. Flitter build a nest the way the birds do?” he asked innocently.” You see it was still hard work for Peter to realize that Flitter isn’t more of a bird than animal.

“What!” cried Flitter and then began to laugh. “No, Peter,” said he. “No, we don’t build a nest. Goodness gracious me, what do we want of a nest?”

Peter confessed that he didn’t know unless for a cradle for their babies.

“If you don’t have a nest, where do you keep your babies? Where are they born?”

he asked.

"That depends on where we happen to be living," replied Flitter promptly. "This year we are living in Farmer Brown's barn, and our babies were born there."

Peter pricked up his ears. "In Farmer Brown's barn!" he exclaimed. "How do you get in and out? And in what part of the barn do you live?"

"Getting in and out is easy enough," replied Flitter. "Way up near the top is an open window, and we go in and out through that. It is lovely and dark up there under the roof even when Mr. Sun is shining his brightest, and there is nothing to bother us. There is a nice little cranny in the rafters which nobody knows of but us, and it was there that our babies were born this year."

Peter was all interest at once. "Are they there now?" he asked.

Flitter chuckled his usual funny squeaky little chuckle.

That's a hard question to answer, Peter," said he, "They may be, and then again they may not be. They were there when I left, but that doesn't mean that they are there now. They may be almost anywhere."

"What?" cried Peter. "Are they big enough to fly about alone? Don't you go with them when they first venture out into the Great World? I should think you would be worried to death. Do they come back home when they are tired?"

"O, they are not yet big enough to fly," replied Flitter, hiding a yawn behind one wing. "I never borrow trouble. It will be time enough to worry when they get big enough to think they know all there is to know and have nothing to learn from their parents. Wherever they are they are safe enough. Probably I'll find them at home when I get back there."

Flitter yawned again, but his sharp little eyes twinkled with mischief, for he saw just how puzzled Peter was.

"Stop teasing me," commanded Peter. "If they are not big enough to fly, how can they be anywhere but at home? If their legs are anything like yours, they certainly cannot run, so how can they leave home?"

"That's a riddle for you to guess, Peter," replied Flitter, and his eyes twinkled more than ever.

STORY 1766. October 9, 1917

The Riddle is Answered

Peter Rabbit doesn't like riddles. When he is curious about a thing he wants to know all about it right away. So when Flitter the Bat told him that his babies were too young to fly and yet that he hadn't the least idea whether or not they were at home where he left them when he started out to hunt for his dinner at dusk, Peter was inclined to be a little provoked.

If those babies were too young to fly, how could they be anywhere but at home? That was what Peter couldn't understand. Flitter said that it was a riddle for Peter to guess, and no amount of teasing on Peter's part induced him to give so much as a hint as to the answer. The truth is he enjoyed teasing Peter. "I don't believe you've been telling me the truth," declared Peter at last. "If your babies can't fly and can't use their legs for getting about as other animals do, of course they must be right there in that cranny in the roof of Farmer Brown's farm where you left them. It is perfectly useless for you to hang there and tell me that they may be most anywhere. I don't call that a riddle at all."

Flitter chuckled and snapped his sharp little eyes. Suddenly he let go of the branch from which he had been hanging just above Peter's head, spread his wings and vanished among the Black Shadows.

"I think he was just fibbing. It isn't a nice thing to think, but I do think it," declared Peter to no one in particular.

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when Flitter reappeared out of the growing darkness and once more hung himself up by the heels from the branch above Peter's head.

"Excuse me, Peter," said he, "but I caught a glimpse of Mrs. Flitter flying overhead and thought she might help you with the answer to that riddle. She will be here in a minute."

Sure enough a minute later Mrs. Flitter darted down and hung herself up beside Flitter.

"Good evening, Peter," she squeaked. "What is this you want to know? If you'll wait a minute until I see to my babies, perhaps I can answer your questions. Babies are a great care when you have to tote them around with you, and I confess I get rather tired. This is a very nice sheltered place, and I'll just get them hung up comfortably before we begin to talk."

Then to Peter's round-eyed amazement two very tiny bats detached themselves from somewhere about Mrs. Flitter and in a jiffy were hanging by their tiny feet head downward from a twig beside their parents. Peter stared. Then all in a flash he guessed the answer to Flitter's riddle.

"D—d—do y—y—you carry your babies around with you when y—y—ou f—f—fly?" he stuttered in growing excitement.

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Flitter. "What else can I do with them? I have to eat and I can't leave little helpless things like these at home where a rat or a mouse might find them and kill them. Of course I take them with me. They are getting big enough now, however, to leave hanging among the leaves of a tree when I am hunting close by, and that is a relief."

"But how do you carry them?" asked Peter eagerly.

"O, they just cling to my fur," replied Mrs. Flitter.

STORY 1767. October 10, 1917

Peter Does a Favor

A favor gladly done you'll find
Your friends will closer to you bind.

In the discovery of how it was that the babies of Flitter the Bat, though too young to fly and unable to walk, could still leave the home in a cranny in the roof of Farmer Brown's barn, Peter Rabbit forgot that he was beginning to feel a little cross because of the teasing by Flitter. You remember that Mrs. Flitter had just told Peter that she carries her babies about with her; that while she flies this way and that way hunting her meals the babies cling to her fur.

"Aren't you afraid they will forget and let go and so get a dreadful fall?" asked Peter.

"O, no," replied Mrs. Flitter. "I don't have to worry about that. Why, sometimes it is hard work to make them let go when I want them to. I think they rather enjoy these rides. Anyway they are always ready to go. But I must confess that it does get a bit tiresome carrying them about, and that is why I sometimes leave them hanging to the twig of a tree hidden among the leaves, although I am more anxious about them then than when they are with me. Are you going to stay here for a little while, Peter?"

"Certainly," replied Peter, looking a bit surprised.

"Then I wonder if you will do me a favor?" replied Mrs. Flitter.

"I'm always glad to do any one a favor," returned Peter promptly. "What can I do for you?"

"Just keep an eye on these babies of mine while Flitter and I finish catching our supper," said Mrs. Flitter.

"Of course they will be perfectly safe hanging here while we are gone, but I will feel better to know that a friend is near and has an eye on them. Will you do it?"

"Of course." Peter's reply was very prompt. "I'll be delighted to do it. If I see anything that looks like danger for them, I will thump with all my might, and if you are not very far away, I guess you can hear me."

"Thank you, Peter. That will be perfectly splendid of you," replied Mrs. Flitter as she and Flitter darted away and were lost among the Black Shadows.

And so it came about that Peter Rabbit found himself in one of the funniest situations he ever had been in. He was keeping guard over two babies hanging above his head where he couldn't reach them if he wanted to, and whom he couldn't even see, though he wouldn't have admitted this for the world. The fact is those two little Bats hanging among the leaves were so like them in the dusk that Peter couldn't for the life of him be sure which were the babies and which were the leaves.

So he kept watch and thought over the things he had learned and wondered

how it would seem to fly and for a time was almost envious of the Flitters. Then he remembered how useless are their legs for walking and how impossible it is for them to run and jump. “We can’t all have everything, and I’m satisfied to stay right on the ground,” he declared aloud.

“A wise decision, a very wise decision, Peter,” chuckled Flitter, swooping down just over Peter’s head. “We are much obliged to you for keeping watch over our babies,” he added. “Now it is time for us to be going back home.”

Mrs. Flitter flew down where her babies hung. They scrambled on to her and with a squeaky “goodbye” the family flew off toward Farmer Brown’s barn.

STORY 1768. October 11, 1917

The Beech-nut Picnic

Over in a certain part of the Green Forest grow silver-barked beeches, the trees that Peter Rabbit thinks are the most beautiful of all trees that in Winter are bare of leaves. Already they were partly bare and the leaves which still clung to them were crisp and yellow. The beech trees, like Johnny Chuck, were about ready to go to sleep for the Winter. You see their Summer’s work was about finished. In fact, it was quite finished, for beneath them hiding among the fallen leaves were ever and ever so many ripe, brown, three-sided little nuts, the sweetest little nuts in the world. That is what Buster Bear says, anyway, but perhaps he isn’t a fair judge.

Those brown three-sided little nuts were the gift of the silver-barked beech trees for the joy and well-being of some of their feathered and furred neighbors. All Summer long those little nuts had been growing in little prickly husks on the beautiful beech trees. At first they had been green, but with the coming of Fall they had turned brown. Now had come Jack Frost of a still October night and opened the prickly little husks. Merry Little Breezes had shaken out the little brown nuts and they had rattled merrily down through the branches to the ground and rolled this way and rolled that way under the crisp fallen leaves.

Now, many sharp eyes had been watching those little husks on the beech trees and waiting for the coming of Jack Frost to open them. The owners of those sharp eyes knew when Jack Frost did come. Of course. He always makes his arrival known by going about and slyly pinching all whom he may find just by way of greeting. So very early in the morning after Jack Frost had opened the little prickly husks many feet were turned toward that part of the Green Forest where grow the beautiful beech trees, and some wings were turned in that direction, too. It was the day of the annual beech-nut picnic.

Chatterer the Red Squirrel and his big cousin, Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel started just as soon as it was light enough to see, but early as they were they found Mrs. Grouse and family there before them. Hardly had they arrived when Sammy Jay appeared and, I am sorry to say, he and Chatterer at once began to call each other names. Then came Redhead, a cousin of Drummer the Woodpecker, who is very fond

of beech nuts. Big Tom Gobbler and Mrs. Gobbler and their whole family of young Gobblers, now nearly as big as their parents, were the next to arrive, and Chatterer greeted them with a perfect storm of abuse, to which they didn't pay the least attention. Chatterer simply wasted his breath.

Presently there was a rustle of leaves, and who should appear but Lightfoot the Deer. Unc' Billy and Mrs. Possum arrived a few minutes later, their sharp eyes twinkling greedily. Whitefoot the Wood Mouse was there, though he took pains to keep out of sight. Of course, Peter Rabbit was there. Not that Peter was at all interested in those sweet, brown nuts. Peter doesn't eat nuts, you know. He was there just because he couldn't stay away. He wanted to see what was going on.

Last of all, shuffling along with funny little grunts and whines of eagerness, came Buster Bear. Buster is very fond of beech nuts and he had been counting on these to help make him fat for the long Winter sleep ahead of him.

"My, but this is going to be some picnic!" murmured Peter Rabbit.

STORY 1769. October 12, 1917

Buster Bear is Piggish

A dreadful thing it is to see
How piggish piggish folks can be.

Now, wouldn't you suppose that when there is plenty for everybody, everybody would be contented and happy? But often, altogether too often, it isn't so at all. The more some folks have the more they want. And there are other folks who, no matter how much they have, seem to think that other folks may be having something better, and instead of making the most of what they have go about trying to get what their neighbors have.

It seemed, it really did, that there were enough of those queer, three-sided little brown nuts under the beech trees for everybody who liked them to have all he could eat, and that that beech-nut picnic that beautiful October morning should be the merriest, happiest kind of a picnic. But it wasn't. No, sir, it wasn't. There were several reasons why it wasn't and the first of these reasons was the piggishness of Buster Bear.

When Buster arrived under the beech trees and saw so many others gathered there for the very same purpose that had brought him there, he right away let selfishness get the best of him. He was greedy, was Buster Bear. He was so greedy that he couldn't bear to see anyone else get a single one of those little, brown, sweet nuts, although he knew well enough that he couldn't eat all of them to save his life. Right away he began to growl, and you know his growl is deep and grumbly-rumbly and not at all pleasant to hear.

Those who were nearest him moved off a little farther, but went right on picking up those brown, sweet, little nuts. Buster Bear growled more and his growl was deeper and more grumbly-rumbly. All the other little, people looked at him anxiously, but

kept right on hunting for those brown, sweet little nuts. Then Buster Bear quite lost his temper.

"These nuts are mine, all mine!" he roared.

Then he ran at Lightfoot the Deer. Lightfoot bounded away, but not far. He knew that Buster Bear could not catch him, and he had no mind to leave those nuts. Then Buster rushed at the Gobbler family and all the Gobblers scurried away, each in a different direction, but they didn't go far. Then Buster rushed this way and rushed that way wherever he saw anyone picking up nuts.

Mrs. Grouse merely darted behind a fallen tree and the minute Buster's back was turned, she was scratching over leaves in search of nuts again. Sammy Jay and Redhead the Woodpecker merely flew up in a tree. Chatterer the Red Squirrel and Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and Unc' Billy and Mrs. Possum climbed the nearest trees." But they were back on the ground again as soon as Buster had turned away.

Peter Rabbit, who was hiding near to see all that went on, had to laugh. He couldn't help it. There was great big Buster Bear so piggish that he wanted all, yet getting hardly a taste because he was spending his time chasing his neighbors. It often is that way with piggish people. In trying to get more than their share they fail to get what they might have as well as not.

STORY 1770. October 13, 1917

Chatterer is a Second Buster Bear

The piggishness of Buster Bear was not at all a pleasant thing to see. But there was one thing about it which was in Buster's favor, and this was the fact that it didn't last long. At least he didn't try long to drive away everybody else that he might have all of those brown, sweet, little beech nuts for himself. Whatever faults Buster may have, stupidity is not one of them. He soon saw that it would be nothing less than stupidity to try to drive the others away because he couldn't do it. So Buster stopped wasting his time in this way and settled down to the business of getting his fair share of those nuts.

In the greedy way in which he hunted for them, he was quite as piggish as ever, but he no longer paid any attention to his neighbors, and allowed them to hunt for their share in peace. He didn't even growl at them. Perhaps one reason was that most of them took great care not to get very near him. If he moved over where Lightfoot the Deer was feeding, Lightfoot quietly moved away to another place, and as Buster was finding plenty and rapidly filling his stomach, his natural good nature returned.

So in a little while everybody was busy and quiet and happy, with one exception, and that one exception was Chatterer the Red Squirrel. Chatterer was a second Buster Bear. That is to say, he was what Buster was at first—piggish. But he was worse than Buster. You see Chatterer was born with an unruly tongue. He has the most unruly tongue in all the Green Forest. As a scold not one can compare with him.

Furthermore, he is greedy to the last degree. Yes, siree, Yes, siree, Chatterer is the

Illustrations. October 8 to October 13, 1917.

1765. Flitter Answers More Questions
"Do you and Mrs. Flitter build a nest the way the birds do?" he asked.

1766. The Riddle is Answered
"I think he was just fibbing."

1767. Peter Does a Favor
He was keeping guard over two babies hanging above his head.

1768. The Beech-nut Picnic
"My, but this is going to be some picnic," murmured Peter.

1769. Buster Bear is Piggish
"These nuts are mine, all mine," he roared.

1770. Chatterer is a Second Buster Bear
So Chatterer was obliged to see his neighbors, little and big, enjoying those nuts.

greediest fellow I know of, and I know a number of very greedy people. He is one of those who, having more than he can use himself, wants what others may have found.

Now there were several hundred times as many beech nuts as Chatterer could possibly make use of, enough for all the people of the Green Forest who like beech nuts, yet if Chatterer could have had his way not one of his neighbors would have been allowed near those brown, sweet, little nuts. But people like Chatterer seldom can have their way, which is a very fortunate thing. So Chatterer was obliged to see his neighbors, little and big, enjoying those nuts, and it upset him sadly. He scolded as fast as his tongue could go, first one and then another. He called them names, all the bad names he could think of. He said that they had no rights in those nuts, but that they all belonged to him because he had been keeping watch over those beech nuts ever since the nuts had begun to form. This, of course, was nonsense, but what could you expect from any one like Chatterer? Quarrelsome scolds seldom have much sense, anyway.

Not only did Chatterer scold, but he would try to drive the others away. As all, with the exception of Whitefoot the Wood Mouse, were bigger than he, of course he didn't succeed. Most of them paid no attention to him, whereat he would scold harder than ever. The only ones who did not notice him were his cousin, Happy Jack Squirrel, and Sammy Jay, both of whom foolishly answered him back. In fact, they would stop hunting nuts to quarrel with him, which was just what Chatterer wanted. But the others kept right on hunting nuts just as if Chatterer didn't even exist, and he kept right on scolding. He quite forgot what he had come there for. He was so piggish about those nuts that he actually was cheating himself. He was so busy trying to prevent others getting any that he himself was getting none.

STORY 1771. October 15, 1917

Chatterer Gets a Shaking

Chatterer the Red Squirrel is one of those foolish people who are positively unhappy when others take no notice of them. Sometimes it seems as if he would rather quarrel than eat. It was just so at that beach nut picnic. At first Sammy Jay and Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel had quarreled with him, but they soon saw how foolish this was and attended strictly to the business in hand, which, was to get their fair share of those delicious, sweet brown little nuts.

But foolish Chatterer continued to race about scolding everybody and claiming that all those nuts belonged to him. The less attention others gave to him the angrier he grew. He was angry because he was piggish and couldn't bear to see the others getting those nuts, and he was angry because no one any longer paid him the least attention.

At first, he had scolded everybody, but after a while he devoted all his scolding to Buster Bear. Perhaps he felt that it made him appear very brave to scorn one so big as Buster Bear. For a long time, he was quite content to do his scolding from the safety of a tree. As Buster moved about from place to place, Chatterer would follow in the tree tops and from high above Buster's head would call him names and say all the mean, unpleasant things he could think of. Buster paid not the least attention to him. He went

right on hunting for nuts, with little whines and grunts of pleasure, just as if there was no one anywhere about.

Chatterer just couldn't stand this. Little by little he crept down from his high perch and clinging to the trunk of the tree scolded harder than ever. Still Buster took no notice of him. Finally Chatterer dropped to the ground and darted right past Buster to another tree. Buster didn't even look up. Chatterer grew angrier than ever. He forgot what he had come, there for. He forgot everything but the desire to make Buster Bear notice him. He grew bolder. Instead of rushing across to another tree he stopped and made faces at Buster.

Buster kept right on hunting for nuts, but though Chatterer didn't know it, Buster was watching him from the corners of his shrewd little eyes. Gradually Buster moved over where the trees were small and Chatterer followed. Suddenly, like a flash, Buster turned on Chatterer, and there is no one who can move more quickly than Buster Bear when he wants to. With a frightened shriek Chatterer raced for the nearest tree and scrambled up to the very top.

Now it happened that the tree was a very small one. Chatterer had climbed it because it was the nearest Buster Bear walked up to it and stood up on his hind legs. Then he took hold of that tree and began to shake it. Buster Bear is very big and very strong, as you know, and the tree was small. The top where Chatterer was clinging snapped back and forth like a whip. Chatterer's tongue was still, quite still. He had no time or desire to scold now. He was having all he could do to hang on, and if ever there was a frightened Squirrel that one was Chatterer. Back and forth, back and forth snapped the top of the tree, harder and harder. With all his might Chatterer clung. He dug his claws into the bark and held on.

Then came a harder snap than before. Chatterer lost his grip and away he went flying through the air! He hit the branches of another tree and tried to cling but couldn't. Then down he fell to the ground. It would have been a bad, a very bad fall for anyone but Chatterer, but it did him no harm save to knock the breath from him for just a second or two. Then he was on his feet and scurrying for safety.

Buster Bear didn't even look at him, but with a twinkle in his eyes calmly went to hunting nuts again.

STORY 1772. October 16, 1917

Chatterer Nurses His Wounds

Chatterer the Red Squirrel sat by himself and sulked. For once his saucy tongue was quiet. He was hidden in the top of a thick hemlock tree just a little beyond where the beech trees grow in the Green Forest. He could hear the rustling of dry leaves under them as certain of his neighbors searched for the sweet little brown nuts hidden there. And he could hear other sounds—a little chuckle here, a little chuckle there, an out-and-out laugh somewhere else, and these sounds made him furious, simply furious. But, for a wonder, he kept his tongue still.

The truth is Chatterer was ashamed to show himself or to make his presence known. He knew the cause of those little chuckles and laughs. O, yes, indeed, as he knew only too well. His neighbors were laughing at the memory of how Buster Bear had shaken the little tree in which he happened to be until his head seemed about to snap off and finally, he himself had been snapped off and sent flying through the air. He hadn't been hurt save in his feelings and right down in his heat he knew that he had received no worse than he deserved.

But he wouldn't have admitted this to anyone, not even to himself, for the world. He was trying his best to pity himself: to make himself believe that he had been greatly wronged. "He's a great big ugly brute," muttered Chatterer, meaning Buster Bear, of course. "The idea, the very idea of such a great fellow picking on such a little fellow as me. He's a coward. That's what he is—a coward! Nobody but a coward would do such a thing. I wish I could be as big as he for just long enough to teach him a lesson. That's what I wish. He's a coward, nothing but a great big coward!"

Now Chatterer knew perfectly well that Buster was nothing of the kind. He knew that he, Chatterer, had brought all his troubles on himself by his unruly tongue and his selfishness about those nuts. He was just trying to fool himself and make himself believe that he had been terribly wronged instead of given a punishment which he richly deserved.

Presently as he heard the rustling of leaves, he began to think of the others who were so busily looking for nuts—his property he called them— and for a time he forgot his recent fright and Buster Bear. He wanted all those nuts himself, although he knew very well that he couldn't gather all if he worked a year, and he couldn't use more than a very small part of the great number even if he could gather them. He didn't want anyone else to have any. And now here he was getting none at all while his neighbors were feasting. And hardest of all to bear was the fact that he couldn't go scold and pretend to drive them away. He couldn't because he couldn't bear to see others laughing at him and he knew that this is just what he would see if he showed himself. So he sat in the top of the hemlock tree and sulked and nursed his fancied wrongs and tried to pity himself and tried to think of some way in which to get even. And all the time Buster Bear and Lightfoot the Deer and Happy Jack Squirrel and Whitefoot the Wood Mouse and Sammy Jay and Redhead the Woodpecker and Unc' Billy Possum and the Gobbler family and the Grouse family went right on enjoying that feast of sweet little brown beechnuts.

STORY 1773. October 17, 1917

Chatterer Does a Shameful Thing

Some people have no sense of shame,
  And do most awful things,
Then wonder why it is that none
  In praise of them e'er sings.

I am sorry to say that Chatterer the Red Squirrel is one of these folks. He comes

very near to being quite shameless. By his deeds you would think that he cares nothing at all for what his neighbors may think of him, yet no one is quicker to resent lack of friendliness on their part. The truth is that Chatterer has no real friends. It is sad but true. And there is no one to blame for this state of affairs but himself. He is too impudent, too much of a scold and too dishonest to win any friends. In spite of this he wants to be included in all that goes on. Aren't some folks queer?

Now as he sat in the top of a tall hemlock tree nursing his fancied wrongs his wits were busy trying to think of some way to get even with his neighbors for laughing at him when Buster Bear gave him such a shaking and terrible fright. Getting even with Buster Bear was quite out of the question. He simply couldn't do it at present any way. He would have to wait and watch for an opportunity. "If only Buster stored away those nuts I would find his storehouse and steal them and in that way I would pay him back," thought Chatterer. But the only way that Buster stores up food is inside his own skin, and there it is quite safe from mischievous rascals like Chatterer. It was just the same with most of the others who were feasting on those sweet little brown beech nuts, but presently Chatterer remembered that there were two, two with whom he most of the time has a standing quarrel, who have storehouses. These two were his cousins, Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and Sammy Jay.

No sooner did Chatterer remember this than he began to plan a shameful thing. He began to plan how he might find out where those storehouses were and then rob them. Yes, sir, that is what Chatterer began to plan. The first thing to do was to spy on Happy Jack and Sammy Jay. The latter would be the hardest to follow because he could fly, so Chatterer decided that first of all he would spy on Happy Jack.

For once he had no desire to use that unruly tongue of his. He wanted above all things to be unheard and unseen. People who do shameful things always try to do them secretly. It was so with Chatterer now. He stole silently from tree to tree, hiding behind a trunk here or a big limb there, and moving only when he was quite sure no one was looking in his direction.

At last, he reached a place where he could look down and see his cousin, Happy Jack, searching among the leaves for the sweet little brown nuts, Some he would eat, but the biggest and fattest and best he would carry away. He didn't carry them far, because he never was gone long enough for that. Chatterer watched sharply. When Happy Jack was busy hunting for nuts Chatterer stole off in the direction Happy Jack usually took. When he'd gone as far as he thought Happy Jack went, he hid and watched.

Presently along came Happy Jack hurrying as fast as ever he could. At a certain big tree he stopped, looking this way and that way, then scrambled up to a hole in the underside of a big limb. In this he disappeared for a minute, then reappeared and scampered back to the beech trees.

Chatterer's eyes sparkled wickedly and he chuckled.

STORY 1774. October 18, 1917

Chatterer Steals

Alas, alas! We all must feel
Contempt for those who try to steal.

Chatterer the Red Squirrel says that he can't help stealing. He says that it was born in him to steal. There may be some truth in that. His father stole, and his grandfather stole, and his great-grandfather stole. The stealing habit has been in the family for a very long time. But the fact that our ancestors did certain things is no reason why we should do them if they are wrong.

Of course, Chatterer the Red Squirrel doesn't have to steal. He is smart enough to find all the food he needs. Neither is he afraid to work. Still, he steals whenever he gets a chance. It really seems sometimes as if he enjoys most those things dishonestly come by. It is quite dreadful.

Now if Chatterer had been content to attend to his own affairs that beautiful October morning, he might have filled his storehouse with sweet, brown, little beech nuts and none would have interfered with him. Nuts there were in plenty for everybody. But Chatterer instead of hunting for nuts must needs make trouble with his tongue until he was frightened half to death and driven away by great big Buster Bear. It served him right and he knew it served him right, but it didn't make him repent. No, sir, I am sorry to say it didn't make him repent. It made him angry instead of sorry. And then it was that the dreadful idea of stealing came to him.

So Chatterer watched such of his neighbors as he knew were in the habit of storing away nuts. He spied on them, especially on his cousin, Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel. And so it came about that he discovered one of Happy Jack's storehouses in a hole in a big limb of a certain tree. Chatterer watched until Happy Jack disappeared in the direction of the beech trees, then with a hasty took around to make sure that no one saw him, he scrambled up to Happy Jack's storehouse and disappeared inside.

In a moment he was out again, his sharp eyes sparkling wickedly and his cheeks stuffed full of the sweet beech nuts Happy Jack had so patiently gathered and hidden there.

"This is a lot easier than hunting for them myself," thought the little red thief, and scampered away through the trees, jumping from branch to branch, until he came to a certain big tree in which was an old nest of Blacky the Crow. Chatterer had long ago taken possession of that nest and roofed it over with twigs and leaves. In this he now hid the nuts he had stolen from Happy Jack's storehouse, and he chuckled wickedly as he did it.

As soon as he had stored these away, he scampered back for more. But he was crafty, was Chatterer. He was very crafty. He didn't go straight back to Happy Jack's storehouse, but hid where he could see it, and watched until he saw Happy Jack come and go again. You see he wanted to make sure that the way was clear. He wouldn't run the risk of visiting that storehouse and finding Happy Jack there.

STORY 1775. October 19, 1917

Sammy Jay Sets his Thinking Cap

A thinking cap's a splendid thing
  If you but rightly use it.
The trouble with a lot of folks
  Is that they will abuse it.

This is just one way of saying that a great many people worse than waste their time by trying to think of ways to do mean things or dishonest things. A thinking cap is—well, of course it isn't a real honest-to-goodness cap. It is an imaginary cap. When a person is thinking very hard we say he has on his thinking cap. I guess that more than once when you have been puzzled by something which ought not to have puzzled you at all, someone has told you to put on your thinking cap.

Sammy Jay has a cap which sometimes seems as if it may be a real thinking cap. When you happen to meet Sammy flying about with nothing in particular on his mind you wouldn't suspect him of having any more of a cap than any other feathered friend. But watch him when he is curious about something, or excited, and you will discover that he has a crest that raises, a regular pointed cap. It seems then like a regular thinking cap.

The morning of the beech nut picnic Sammy Jay was quite as busy as any of his neighbors, for Sammy is very fond of those sweet little brown beech nuts. Moreover, Sammy is at times very thrifty. Having filled his stomach he hides in all sorts of places such kinds of food as will keep. He was doing just this thing that beautiful October morning. He is very fond of beech nuts and, like Happy Jack Squirrel, he was making the most of the opportunity to store away a lot of them against the day when other food should be scarce. With his usual craft he was very silent about it. His usually noisy tongue was silent. He came and went so quietly that his neighbors, busy with their own search for the delicious goodies, took no notice of him.

Now it happened that Sammy had taken some of those sweet little brown nuts over to a certain knothole in a tree not far from the very tree in which Chatterer the Red Squirrel was hiding the nuts he had stolen from Happy Jack's storehouse. Sammy had just dropped a couple of nuts in that knothole when he happened to look up and catch a glimpse of Chatterer jumping from one tree to another and he knew by Chatterer's swollen cheeks that he was taking a lot of nuts to some secret hiding place. Right away Sammy was interested. Silently he followed and saw Chatterer disappear in the old nest of Blacky the Crow.

In a minute Chatterer reappeared and started back the way he had come, and that way was not in the direction of the beech trees. Right then and there Sammy set his thinking cap. He was interested. He was suspicious, and that crest on his head was promptly raised.

"Now what does that mean?" thought Sammy. "That red-coated thief is getting nuts somewhere and he isn't going toward those beech trees at all. If I know anything

about it, he is stealing those nuts. I think I'll watch him a bit and find out."

So taking care not to make a sound, and equal care not to show himself, he followed Chatterer the Red Squirrel and in this way, he discovered what Chatterer was about.

STORY 1776. October 20, 1917

It Takes a Thief to Catch a Thief

"It takes a thief to catch a thief."
This saying is quite old,
But there's no saying that I know
In which more truth is told.

Sammy Jay was proving this. If there was anybody in all the Green Forest who could catch Chatterer the Red Squirrel at his thieving that somebody was Sammy Jay. You see Sammy is a thief himself. I am sorry to say it, but it is true, as everybody knows. And he is a very clever thief, too. So being very clever in the art of stealing Sammy was just the one to catch Chatterer.

Silently and keeping out of sight, he followed Chatterer and saw him disappear in Happy Jack's storehouse in the hollow limb of a big tree. In a minute Chatterer was out and starting back for his own storehouse in the old nest of Blacky the Crow. Sammy started to follow and then changed his mind. He knew where Chatterer was bound for. What he didn't know was whether or not Chatterer was really stealing those nuts. It might, it just might, be possible that Chatterer was simply moving his own stores from one hiding place to another. So Sammy remained right where he was.

It wasn't long before he heard a rustle of dry leaves, and, looking down, he saw Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel scampering along with his mouth full of beech nuts. Up the tree he ran and disappeared in the hole in the big limb. A minute later he was out and away in the direction of the beech trees. Sammy Jay chuckled. "I thought as much," said he. "Chatterer has discovered Happy Jack's storehouse and is stealing those nuts as fast as Happy Jack brings them, and Happy doesn't know it."

He flew over to the hole and peeked in. It wasn't a hole he cared to enter. So far as Sammy was concerned Happy Jack's stores were quite safe. Then Sammy flew off a little way to watch and think things over. He saw Chatterer return and hide until Happy Jack had come back and gone away again. Then Chatterer stole some more nuts just as before and raced away with them toward his own storehouse in the old nest of Blacky the Crow in a big tree some distance away. Sammy chuckled and if you had been there to hear that chuckle you would have at once suspected that Sammy had some- thing on his mind. He did have.

"That red-coated thief thinks he is smart," thought Sammy. "He is robbing his own cousin and thinking how smart he is to get all those sweet, brown, little nuts without the trouble of hunting for them one by one. What is fair for one is fair for another. I think those nuts will taste quite as good to me as they possibly could to him. I'll wait a

Illustrations. October 15 to October 20, 1917.

1771. Chatterer Gets a Shaking
It made him appear very brave to scold one so big as Buster Bear.

1772. Chatterer Nurses His Wounds
So he sat in the top of the hemlock tree and sulked.

1773. Chatterer Does a Shameful Thing
At last he reached a place where he could look down and see his cousin, Happy Jack.

1774. Chatterer Steals
"This is a lot easier than hunting for them myself."

1775. Sammy Jay Sets his Thinking Cap
Silently he followed and saw Chatterer disappear in the old nest of Blacky the Crow.

1776. It Takes a Thief to Catch a Thief
He flew over the hole and peeked in.

bit and see what happens here, and then—" Sammy didn't finish that, but he chuckled more than ever, and it was plain to see that he found his thoughts very pleasant. Meanwhile he kept hidden and watched and waited. He felt sure that sooner or later Happy Jack Squirrel would find out what was going on and when he did, there was bound to be lively times about there. He wanted to be there. You know Sammy Jay is very fond of excitement. He ever misses anything of the kind when he can help it. So, Sammy waited and watched, and, sure enough, his patience was rewarded.

STORY 1777. October 22, 1917

The Quarrel of Two Cousins

Alas! alas! When cousins fight
  How dreadful 'tis to see!
I cannot think of anything
  That any worse can be.

And yet some people love to see a fight. Sammy Jay is one of these. Sammy is never happier than when he is quarreling himself or watching others quarrel. I suppose it is because he loves excitement and there is no greater excitement than a quarrel which may lead to a fight.

It was because he hoped to see just these things that Sammy hid where he could watch the storehouse of Happy Jack Squirrel from which Chatterer the Red Squirrel was stealing. For quite a while nothing happened. Happy Jack brought sweet, brown little beechnuts and hid them away in the hollow limb which was his storehouse. As soon as he went for more, Chatterer would appear and take away as many as he could stuff in both cheeks. Sammy wondered how long it would be before Happy Jack missed those nuts.

Finally it was plain that Happy Jack had discovered that something was wrong. He spent a long time in his storehouse and Sammy could hear him talking to himself. When at last he poked his head out, Happy Jack looked worried. He had discovered that instead of growing larger that store of nuts was very mysteriously growing smaller. He didn't know just what to make of it. For a few minutes he sat jerking his tail nervously. Then as if he gave it up as a bad job, he started back toward the beech trees after more of those sweet, brown little nuts.

The instant Happy Jack was out of sight, Chatterer, who all the time had been hidden where he could watch Happy Jack, appeared and hurried to steal more of those sweet little nuts. Now it happened that Happy Jack was still turning over and over in his mind the mystery of those vanishing stores of his and half way back to the beech trees, he decided to have another look at his storehouse. So back he came and reached the tree in the hollow limb of which his storehouse was just as Chatterer came out with his cheeks stuffed full of the nuts Happy Jack had so patiently gathered.

At sight of him Happy Jack understood in a flash the mystery of the disappearance of his supplies. Almost choking with anger, he started up the tree and almost reached

Chatterer before the latter saw him. Away darted Chatterer and after him Happy Jack. From tree to tree they jumped. It was very exciting and Sammy Jay followed in high glee. Chatterer was altogether too smart to go back to his own storehouse and presently finding that he couldn't run and jump his best with his cheeks stuffed so full, he dropped the beechnuts and turned to fight.

Dear me, dear me, such a sad sight as these two cousins did make as they quarreled and fought in the tree-top that beautiful October day! It was shameful. Although Happy Jack was much the larger of the two, Chatterer was the quicker in his movements and so the fight was not at all unequal. Of course, Happy Jack was in the right and when he called Chatterer a thief, as he did over and over again, he was stating the truth. But those sharp, angry voices were not at all pleasant to hear.

So they chased each other and fought until they were so tired that they simply had to stop. Still scolding and calling names, Happy Jack went to his storehouse to see just how much he had lost. Chatterer shouted a few ugly things after him and then started for the old nest of Blacky the Crow, in which he had hidden his stolen goodies. He went there to gloat over them just as if he had come by them honestly instead of dishonestly, for he is quite shameless.

STORY 1778. October 23, 1917

Chatterer Doesn't Gloat

To gloat over a thing is to gaze at it with satisfaction and pleasure, very often with the wrong kind of pleasure. Persons who have come by things in a wrong or dishonest way are very apt to gloat over them and find a wicked kind of pleasure in just looking at the results of their own wrong-doing. When Happy Jack Squirrel returned to his storehouse to find out just how much had been stolen and to mourn his loss, Chatterer started for his secret storehouse in the old nest of Blacky the Crow for quite another purpose. He was tired from the long fight with Happy Jack and while he rested, he meant to gloat over those stolen beechnuts.

As he jumped from, tree to tree, Chatterer chuckled wickedly. He considered himself very smart. He actually had enjoyed that fight with his cousin, Happy Jack, dreadful as that seems. You see he is one of those people who really enjoy quarreling and fighting. And now while he rested and planned more mischief he meant to gloat over those sweet, brown, little beechnuts, which didn't belong to him at all. He was, I am sorry to say, in the very best of spirits as he jumped across the tree in which that old nest was.

Before going to the nest, he looked this way and looked that way to make sure that no one was about to see him. The fact that he was using that old nest as a storehouse was one of his most precious secrets.

He always took the greatest care to make sure that no one should see him going there. Of course, he knew that a great many others knew of the old nest, but he also knew that they knew that Blacky the Crow had given it up long ago and so it was a

deserted nest. He had spent much time in fixing it up to suit himself, and this he had done secretly. He had roofed it over with twigs and leaves and pine-needles until it was really a very fine place for a Red Squirrel to live in or to use as a storehouse. He had used it to live in more or less through the Summer, but now it was to be a storehouse and those beechnuts he had stolen from Happy Jack made a splendid start toward filling it.

Satisfied that no one was about, Chatterer ran swiftly up to the old nest. He was in a hurry to get inside and gloat over his ill-gotten supplies. With a last nimble bound he landed at the edge of the nest where he had made a clever little entrance. Right then and there, Chatterer got a shock that for the moment made him quite speechless. He had come there to gloat, but there was to be no gloating for Chatterer that day. No, sir, there was to be no gloating for that little red scamp that day. Why? Well, the very first thing that Chatterer saw was that the carefully made roof over the old nest had been torn open. Yes, sir, it had been torn open. The pine needles and leaves and twigs had been pulled apart hurriedly and there was a great gaping hole in the very middle of the roof. With a squeal of rage Chatterer rushed to peep inside. His worst fears were realized. Inside was just one lonesome little brown beechnut and that was all. He certainly couldn't gloat over that. And so Chatterer didn't gloat. Instead, he flew into a terrible rage.

STORY 1779. October 24, 1917

Why Chatterer had No Chance to Gloat

Have you guessed why it was that Chatterer the Red Squirrel had no chance to gloat over the store of beechnuts he had stolen from his cousin, Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, and hidden in the old nest of Blacky the Crow? Have you guessed how it happened that when he got there all he found was one lonesome little nut? Chatterer didn't have to guess; he knew. One glance at the torn roof of his storehouse was enough for Chatterer. He knew there was just one person who could have done that. At once he flew into a terrible rage.

"Sammy Jay did that!" he shrieked. "He's a thief, a thief, a thief, just a low down miserable thief! He hasn't an honest feather on him! If ever I catch him he'll be sorry. I'll—I'll—"

But what Chatterer meant to do if ever he caught Sammy Jay no one will know but himself. You see he didn't finish that threat because he was so angry that he choked. He just couldn't get any more words out.

Chatterer was quite right in his suspicions. You remember how Sammy had discovered that Chatterer was stealing Happy Jack's beechnuts and hiding them in that old nest. You remember how Sammy had waited to see the quarrel between Chatterer and Happy Jack. He had watched it little while and then he had his opportunity. So while Chatterer and Happy Jack quarreled and fought and then were quite tired out, Sammy worked hard. It hadn't taken him long to tear open the roof of leaves and pine-needle and twigs that Chatterer had built over that old nest. Sammy's bright eyes had

sparkled at sight of the heap of sweet, brown little beechnuts that he had found inside.

They don't belong to Chatterer," said he to himself. "He stole every one of them and so he has no right to them. They belong to Happy Jack, but Happy Jack never would find them in the wide world. It will serve Chatterer just right to lose them. Perhaps it will teach him a lesson. If he had come by them honestly it would be a very different matter, but he didn't. I don't consider that it will be stealing to take these. The don't belong to Chatterer and the one they do belong to won't get them, so I may as well have them."

Sammy was saying this to try to make what he was about to do appear right in his own eyes. Right down in his heart he knew that it would have made no difference now Chatterer had come by those nuts. It is one of the laws of the little people of the Green Forest that anyone shall take what he finds if he can. So when they steal from each other it is not quite the same as when human folks steal. Because of this law, Chatterer's theft from Happy Jack wasn't as bad as it seemed.

So Sammy went to work at once, for he had no desire to be caught at it. Back and forth he hurried silently. Some of those little brown beechnuts he hid in knotholes in trees. Some he hid behind ragged pieces of bark that were partly torn from the trunks of trees. Some he hid in crotches where big limbs sprang out from the trunks of trees and covered them with leave or pine needles. He hid them in all sorts of places, for Sammy has many hiding places. He had secured all but one when he saw Chatterer returning and wisely flew away, chuckling as he flew. And that is why Chatterer had no chance to gloat over his ill-gotten gains.

STORY 1780. October 25, 1917

Chatterer Finds No Sympathy

Chatterer the Red Squirrel has a way of expressing his feelings with his tail. It is a fact that Chatterer's tail is very, very useful to him as a means of expression. Whenever he is angry, he jerks it. Whenever he scolds, and this is a good part of the time, he jerks it. And often when he is spying on other people and does not want to be seen, and for this reason cannot use his tongue, he gives expression to his feelings by means of that funny little tail.

When he discovered that Sammy Jay had taken all the stolen beechnuts which he had hidden in the old nest of Blacky the Crow, the rage that filled him was so great that he actually choked with it. And how he did jerk that tail of his! If you had been where you could have seen nothing but that tail, you would have known without being told just what Chatterer's feelings were. You wouldn't have needed to hear his voice at all. Every jerk that tail meant temper, and bad temper. It wasn't just the loss of those beechnuts he had stolen from his cousin, Happy Jack, that made him so angry. It was the knowledge that this old nest he had secretly taken so much pains to put a roof on and fix for a storehouse was now of no more use to him. Sammy Jay had found it, and he knew that if he should repair it and use it again as a storehouse, Sammy would sooner or later break into it again.

So after he had scolded until his tongue was tired, and had jerked his tail back and forth, back and forth, until it ached, he started back to the beech trees where his neighbors had all day been feasting. He simply had to tell someone about Sammy Jay and what he had done.

The first one he saw was Mrs. Grouse, who had eaten sweet, brown, little beechnuts until she hadn't room for another one, and was taking a sunbath in solid comfort. At once Chatterer began to pour out all his troubles.

"Now, what do you think of that?" he finished.

"That it serves you just right," replied Mrs. Grouse.

At once Chatterer flew into another rage and said all the unkind things he could think of to Mrs. Grouse, to which she paid not the slightest attention. This didn't suit Chatterer at all, so he went on. Presently he met Bobby Coon and started in to tell the story all over again. Now Bobby had a full stomach and was on his way home for a nap.

"Become honest yourself before you call another a thief," said he shortly and calmly turned his back.

Lightfoot the Deer simply tossed his handsome head when he heard the tale of woe.

"Did you come by those beechnuts honestly? I haven't seen you gathering any," said he, and Chatterer could not find a word to reply.

As for Unc' Billy Possum he grinned as only Unc' Billy can.

"Brer Chatterer," said he, "Ah done got mo' respect fo' Brer Jay than ever Ah had befo'. Why don't yo' try being honest fo' awhile yo'self. Yo' won't find any sympathy lying loose around these parts."

And Chatterer didn't. He found that everyone thought that he had been served just right, and not one had a word to say against Sammy Jay. So once more Chatterer went off to sulk by himself and jerk his poor little tail in foolish anger.

STORY 1781. October 26, 1917

Chatterer Becomes Wiser if not Better

There is nothing like having plenty of time to think in which to gain wisdom. Just take the case of Chatterer the Red Squirrel. No one would listen to his tale of woe. No one had any sympathy for him. Whoever he tried to tell his story to simply refused to listen and usually told him that he was served Just right. So finally he gave up in rage and again went off by himself to sulk.

Now, sulking all alone is mighty unsatisfactory business. There is no fun in sulking all by yourself. Chatterer soon found this out. Pretty soon he began to do some thinking. Why was it that nobody would listen to him? Why did everybody seem to be glad that Sammy Jay had broken into his storehouse and taken all those beechnuts

he had stolen from Happy Jack? Sammy was just as much a thief as he was, and everybody knew it. Still everybody seemed to think that Sammy Jay had treated him just right. He hadn't found a single one who was sorry for him.

He thought these things all over and then began to think of other thing. Here it was almost time for jolly, round, red Mr. Sun to go to bed behind the Purple Hills and he, Chatterer, had lost a whole harvest day. His storehouses were empty of beechnuts. He hadn't even had a good square meal himself. But his neighbors had. They had stuffed themselves and now were contented and happy while he was hungry and sulky and angry with everybody and everything. Why was it? Whose fault was it? "Not mine! No, sir, not mine" declared Chatterer to himself. You see he was trying to make himself believe this, so he said it over several times.

But it was useless. It was quite useless. In spite of himself, his thoughts went back to the very beginning of the day when he had come racing over to the beech trees, knowing that during the night Jack Frost had opened the prickly husks which had guarded the west, little, brown nuts. There were enough of those little three-sided nuts for everybody who likes them, and he had known it, but in his speed he had spent the early morning scolding others and pretending that they had no rights to those sweet little nuts when they had just as much right to them as he had. Instead of getting his share, he had spent his time making a nuisance of himself until Buster Bear had given him such a shaking and fright that he had not dared return.

Then he had spied on Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, found his storehouse and robbed it, all the time thinking himself very clever and smart. Now here he was at the end of the day with not a thing to show for it, for Sammy Jay had done to him just what he had done to Happy Jack. Right down in his heart Chatterer knew that no one was to blame but himself. He wouldn't admit it, but he knew it just the same.

Chatterer curled up in his bed that night still muttering that on the best day he would get even with everybody. But when the next day came, he was out bright and early and the first to begin hunting for the little brown beechnuts. When his neighbors began to arrive, he paid no attention to them: he worked. He was too busy to quarrel. He hadn't time. Selfishness and quarreling had cost him too much the day before. Chatterer was wiser if not better. So he worked, and for a time there was peace in the Green Forest.

STORY 1782. October 27, 1917

Reddy Fox is Interested in Beechnuts

Reddy Fox Interested in beechnuts— doesn't that sound a bit queer? Reddy Fox doesn't eat beechnuts. Of course not. And yet Reddy was quite as much interested in the ripening of the sweet, little brown nuts of the beech trees as were those who dearly love them to eat. You see it is this way: Reddy doesn't eat the nuts, but he does eat some of those little people who do. That is, he does when he can catch them.

Now there isn't much going on in the Green Forest or on the Green Meadows that

Reddy Fox doesn't know about. He makes it his business to know all that is going on. You see he has to live by his wits, and anyone who lives by his wits must know as much as possible about what is going on so that if there is an opportunity he may take advantage of it. No one knows this better than Reddy Fox. So, strange as it may seem, Reddy was personally interested in those sweet, brown, little fruits of the beech trees, for a nut is a kind of fruit, you know. The first day of the beechnut picnic Reddy was busy elsewhere, but on the morning of the second day he said to Mrs. Reddy:

"My dear, Jack Frost has been busy for two nights and unless I am greatly mistaken, he has opened most of the burrs on the nut trees. I think it would be wise to visit the Green Forest today, especially that part where the beech trees grow. I have an idea that there will be plenty of those nice, sweet, little, brown beechnuts on the ground now.

Mrs. Reddy, who happened just then to be trying to think of some new plan of catching Danny Meadow Mouse or one of his family, looked at Reddy as if she suspected that he wasn't quite in his right mind.

"What of it?" she demanded. "I'm not interested in squirrel food."

"No, my dear, neither am I as food," replied Reddy. "But we both are interested in Squirrels, and where there is plenty of Squirrel food there we will find squirrels. I caught a glimpse of Happy Jack Squirrel the other day and he is so fat that it made my mouth water just to see him. Besides, I happen to know that there are several others in whom we are interested who are quite as fond of beechnuts as Happy Jack."

"Who for instance?" asked Mrs. Reddy.

"The Grouse family and the Gobbler family among others," replied Reddy with a grin.

Mrs. Reddy returned the grin.

"Of course," said she. "How stupid of me to forget them. You are quite right, Reddy. We certainly must visit the beech trees today. I find I have a great deal of interest in beechnuts after all. In fact, I don't know of anything quite so interesting just now. When shall we start?"

"The sooner the better," replied Reddy promptly. "There is no time like the present.

He grinned again and licked his lips. Mrs. Reddy grinned back and licked her lips. Then Reddy turned and led the way toward the Green Forest, and right at his heels trotted Mrs. Reddy. Every few steps Reddy licked his lips. Mrs. Reddy did the same thing.

You know that is a way certain people have when they are thinking of good things to eat.

STORY 1783. October 29, 1917

Illustrations. October 22 to October 27, 1917.

1777. The Quarrel of Two Cousins
At the sight of him, Happy Jack understood in a flash the mystery of the disappearance of his supplies.

1778. Chatterer Doesn't Gloat
As he jumped from tree to tree, Chatterer chuckled wickedly.

1779. Why Chatterer had No Chance to Gloat
He had secured all but one when he saw Chatterer returning.

1780. Chatterer Finds No Sympathy
"Become honest yourself before you call another a thief," said he shortly.

1781. Chatterer Becomes Wiser if not Better
When his neighbors began to arrive he paid no attention to them.

1782. Reddy Fox is Interested in Beechnuts
"What of it?" she demanded. "I'm not interested in squirrel food."

Chatterer Proves Himself a Friend

The little people of the Green Meadows and the Green Forest, the Laughing Brook and the Smiling Pool, the Old Orchard and the Old Pasture, no matter what their feelings toward each other, the minute a common danger is discovered, give warning to all who are near. Thus Sammy Jay has warned Peter Rabbit more than once of the approach of Reddy Fox, causing Reddy to grind his teeth with rage. But Sammy has made it up to Reddy by often warning him of the approach of a hunter with a terrible gun.

Chatterer the Red Squirrel was very busy the second morning of the feast of beechnuts in the Green Forest. He was working with might and main to make up for the day before, which he had so foolishly wasted. He meant to have his share of those sweet, little, brown nuts, and he couldn't stop to quarrel, not even when he caught a glimpse of Sammy Jay's blue coat. But Chatterer wasn't so busy that his sharp eyes missed anything going on about him.

Everybody who was there the day before was on hand this morning, the Grouse family, the Gobbler family, Lightfoot the Deer, Buster Bear, Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel, Redhead the Woodpecker, Bobby Coon, Unc' Billy and Ol' Mrs. Possum, Whitefoot the Wood Mouse. Not one of them spoke to Chatterer. They just pretended not to see him. They hadn't forgotten how the day before Chatterer had robbed his own cousin, Happy Jack, so they simply had nothing to do with him.

Chatterer pretended that he didn't care. Right down in his heart he did care, but not for the world would he have shown it. So there under the beech trees in the Green Forest there was peace and everybody was busy as could be. By and by it happened that Chatterer ran up in a tree to rest a minute. Right underneath him were two of the young Gobblers so intent on filling their crops with those delicious beechnuts that they had no thought for anything else. A step at a time they were drawing near a little clump of low-growing hemlock trees. Chatterer glanced down and under those young hemlock trees he saw something red.

In an instant Chatterer was suspicious. He ran out to the end of a branch where he could see better. There was no mistaking that color. It was the red of the coat of Reddy Fox. Reddy was hiding there and in a minute or two those young Gobblers would be within his reach. Chatterer tried to make himself believe that he didn't care what happened to them; that he didn't care what happened to any of these neighbors who wouldn't speak to him. Nearer came the young Gobblers to Reddy's hiding place. A few steps more and one at least would never take another step. Chatterer tried to keep his tongue still, but he couldn't. He couldn't forget that he was a Quaddy[36].

"Fox! Fox! Look out!" he shrieked.

Instantly the young Gobblers turned, ran a few steps and spread their wings. Safe in a tree they stretched their long necks and looked this way and that way.

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36 Quaddy products were beginning to be advertised for the Christmas season during this time.

"Where is that Fox?" they demanded suspiciously, for they were not at all sure that this wasn't one of Chatterer's jokes.

STORY 1784. October 30, 1917

Happy Jack has Reason to Thank Chatterer

When Chatterer the Red Squirrel gave the warning which saved the two young Gobblers who were within a few steps of the hiding place of Reddy Fox, there was great excitement all about. Not only the two young Gobblers took to the trees but also all the other Gobblers and all the Grouse family. You see none knew just where Reddy was, so the wisest thing to do was to seek safety first and find out later. Only Lightfoot the Deer and Buster Bear and Bobby Coon kept right on hunting for beech-nuts. They had nothing to fear from Reddy Fox.

At first all the others held the same suspicion that the young Gobblers did, which was that Chatterer might be playing a joke, for he has been known to play just such jokes as that. But as he continued to stare down into that little thicket of young hemlock trees and shout, "Fox! Fox!" it was quite plain to see that he was in earnest. Then Buster Bear strolled over toward that little thicket, and with a snarl of disappointment and anger Reddy Fox ran out. He glared up at Chatterer, and in his eyes Chatterer read all that Reddy would like to do to him.

Buster Bear growled his deepest, most grumbly-rumbly growl and Reddy hurried faster. Sammy Jay followed him to make sure that he really left that part of the Green Forest, and the Gobbler family and the Grouse family at in the trees, until Sammy returned. Reddy did leave. He knew that it was of no use to stay. Besides, disappointed as he was, he had not given up hope. You see there was Mrs. Reddy. She hadn't hidden in the same place he had. No indeed! They were too smart to make such mistakes as that. She was lying flat on her stomach behind an old log partly covered with brush, and there was still a chance that she would succeed where Reddy had failed.

As soon as Sammy Jay returned, everybody seemed to take it for granted that the danger was past and in a little while all were as busy as before hunting for beechnuts. Chatterer alone was still suspicious. He remembered Mrs. Reddy and how often he had seen Reddy and Mrs. Reddy hunt together. He wondered where she was now, and as he hunted for beechnuts he kept an eye open for danger. Presently as he was hurrying back from one of his store-houses, his way led him behind a certain old log partly covered with brush. He was almost past when he caught sight of something strange there. He stopped and looked intently. Then he chuckled. It was a noiseless little chuckle down in his throat. There was no mistaking what he saw. It was a tail, the tail of a Fox. Chatterer turned and scampered up a tree where he could watch.

He had been in that tree only a little while when he saw his cousin, Happy Jack Squirrel, hurrying along, and unless he turned he would pass close in front of that old log. Happy Jack was fat with good living. Chatterer knew that Mrs. Reddy would be only too glad to catch him. He remembered how he and Happy Jack had quarreled the day before, how they had fought until they were tired out.

"If he keeps on, we'll never fight again," thought Chatterer.

Then, because he isn't all bad, and because, after all, Happy Jack is his cousin, Chatterer once more gave warning.

"Fox! Fox! Run, Happy Jack! Run for your life!" he shrieked.

And Happy Jack did. He darted up the nearest tree. He wasn't at all sure that Chatterer was telling the truth, but he would take no chances.

"Where is that Fox?" he demanded as soon as he was safe.

"Right down behind that old log you were going to pass," barked Chatterer. Happy Jack looked and from his place high in the tree he could see Mrs. Reddy stretched out flat on her stomach. He looked across at Chatterer.

"Thanks for the warning, Cousin Chatterer," said he. "I guess you have more than paid for those nuts you stole from my warehouse."

STORY 1785. October 31, 1917

Old Man Coyote Tries His Luck

The beechnuts shaken from the trees
  By every passing Little Breeze—
Three-sided, little, brown and sweet—
  Are most delicious things to eat.

That is what Happy Jack Squirrel says. So does Chatterer the Red Squirrel. So do the Grouse family and the Gobbler family and Lightfoot the Deer and great big Buster Bear and tiny little Whitefoot the Wood Mouse and Sammy Jay and several others I might name. Right down in their hearts I suspect they are a bit sorry for those people who do not eat beechnuts.

But they needn't be. No, sir, they needn't be. You see some of those people who don't eat beechnuts are just as much pleased when the beech-nuts ripen and fall as are the ones who do eat them. They know that beechnuts are very fattening to those who do eat them, and that they make very sweet and tender flesh. And they know that people who are fat are easier to catch than those who are thin, and ever so much more satisfactory when they are caught. Reddy Fox is one who does not eat beechnuts but nevertheless is glad when beechnut time comes around. Mrs. Reddy is another. Granny Fox is a third. Old Man Coyote is a fourth, not to mention Shadow the Weasel and Hooty the Owl and Mr. Goshawk and some others I might mention.

You know how Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy were on hand on the second day of the great beechnut feast, and how Chatterer the Red Squirrel upset their plans for catching one or more of the little feasters. Old Man Coyote knew all about what happened that day, too. He had been looking the ground over, as he would say, and while he had not been near enough to see, he had heard Chatterer give warning and it had made him chuckle. Taking care that none should see him he trotted back home still chuckling.

“Foolish, very, very foolish of them to try so soon,” he muttered to himself. “Those Foxes think themselves very smart. They’re not. No, sir, they’re not. If they If they were they would have waited a few days. Now I am going to keep away from there until those beech-nuts are not so plentiful. When they begin to get a little bit scarce, Happy Jack Squirrel and those Grouse and those Gobblers will have to scatter more in order to find them, and that will give me a better chance to catch one of them. Besides, they will be fatter because of all they have eaten. That means they will not be able to move so quickly. More than that, they will be better eating when they are caught.”

So crafty Old Man Coyote kept away from the Green Forest and was patient. At the end of a week, he decided that it was time to try his luck. Before daylight he was hidden in a clump of withered ferns on the very edge of the beech grove and there he waited for the Jolly Little Sunbeams to chase away the last of the Black Shadows. Hardly had the Black Shadows gone when the Gobbler family arrived and at once scattered and began to hunt for their breakfast of sweet, brown little beechnuts. The Grouse family were not far behind. Then came Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and Chatterer the Red Squirrel.

Old Man Coyote kept a sharp eye on the latter, for he remembered that it was Chatterer who had upset the plans of Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy. It was with relief that he saw Chatterer attending strictly to the business of hunting for nuts on the other side of the grove. Presently a fat young Gobbler headed straight toward the clump of ferns in which Old Man Coyote lay.

“Luck is with me,” thought Old Man Coyote, and his mouth began to water as he watched the young Gobbler and saw that in his greed, he was careless and not the least bit suspicious of danger.

STORY 1786. November 1, 1917

Buster Bear Does a Good Turn

Unknowingly we often do
    A deed that makes our neighbors glad.
Alas, that in that selfsame way
    It happens that we make them sad.

It is a fact, one of the truest facts in all the world, that we cannot live to ourselves alone. Everything we say, everything we do, affects other people. That is the real meaning of influence. We are influencing the lives of those about us every day and all the time. Your simplest act may influence the life of someone else, and you may never suspect it. That is why we should be very, very careful all the time what we do and say.

Buster Bear hadn’t the least thought of doing anybody a good turn. Buster was thinking of no one but himself. He was wholly intent on filling his stomach with sweet, brown, little beech-nuts, for they were good to eat and very fattening, and Buster wanted to get as fat as possible before cold weather that he might sleep the Winter away In comfort.

So Buster paid little or no attention to his neighbors but rooted among the fallen leaves under the beech trees, greedily eating the little brown nuts he found hidden there. Wherever Buster chose to hunt, his neighbors politely withdrew that he might have that place to himself. I suspect they didn't do it willingly or wholly out of politeness. It was done out of respect for Buster's great size and strength. Anyway it was done, and no one quarreled with him.

Now it happened on this particular morning that just as a certain fat and heedless young Gobbler began to walk toward a certain clump of withered ferns in quest of stray beechnuts that might have fallen there, Buster took it into his head to hunt in the same direction. He shuffled along, raking over the leaves with his claws, his shrewd little eyes twinkling with pleasure every time he spied a nut.

The fat young Gobbler paused, came on a few steps, eyeing Buster timidly; paused again, and finally as Buster shuffled along nearer to the clump of withered ferns turned back and went to look elsewhere. Buster didn't so much as glance at the fat young Gobbler. There were many sweet, brown little beechnuts there and Buster had no interest in anything but these. He was very busy, was Buster Bear, and quite contented.

From time to time, other young Gobblers came, looked wistfully and went away. So did several of the Grouse family. They knew by Buster's little grunts and whines of satisfaction that there must be plenty of nuts there, but as long as he remained there, was nothing for them to do but to hunt somewhere else. They knew, too, that when he got through there would be no little beechnuts left. So after a little, that particular place was left wholly to Buster Bear.

Of course, all the others were disappointed, dreadfully disappointed, but they didn't begin to be as disappointed as someone else. Hidden in that clump of withered ferns lay Old Man Coyote. He had been there since before daylight. He had watched the fat young Gobbler, who had first found the place, come almost within reach. Just a few steps more would have brought him within jumping distance. And right then along had come Buster Bear.

Old Man Coyote had been forced to lie still and swallow his disappointment as best he could. He had seen the other young Gobblers and the Grouse come, look, and go away. He had been obliged to listen to Buster Bear's grunts of pleasure as he filled his stomach, while all the time his own stomach was empty. And he had understood perfectly that when Buster finally did leave, the others would not return, because they would know it was useless.

So you see Buster Bear, unknown to himself, unknown to everybody but Old Man Coyote, had done his neighbors a good turn. He had saved the life of the fat young Gobbler, and perhaps of some others. Isn't it queer how important little things sometimes are?

STORY 1787. November 2, 1917

Sammy Jay Drops a Nut

How do you suppose Old Man Coyote felt as he lay hiding in the clump of withered ferns and saw Buster Bear upset all his carefully laid plans for a good meal on one of those busy seekers for sweet little beechnuts? I can guess, can't you? All he could do was to keep perfectly still and hope that Buster would go away. He had one cause for satisfaction, anyway, and this was that he hadn't been discovered. No one knew that he was there or anywhere about. He hoped that no one would find it out. You see if the Gobblers and the Grouse and Happy Jack Squirrel didn't know that he was watching their feeding place, they would be likely to be less watchful and grow careless. Then, though he had failed this time, he might be able to catch one of them later.

So Old Man Coyote kept perfectly still and hoped for a chance to slip away unseen. Then he would come the next day and try again. The one thing he feared was that Buster Bear might take it into his head to see if any beechnuts had fallen in that clump of ferns. Buster made him nervous. Several times Buster came almost over to the clump of ferns, and Old Man Coyote made ready to run. But each time, Buster turned aside and Old Man Coyote sighed with relief. At last Buster began to work farther and farther away and it looked very much as if Old Man Coyote need worry no longer about the danger of being discovered. In a few minutes the way would be clear, and he would slip out of his hiding place and away.

It was just then that Sammy Jay came that way looking for a place in which to hide a nut he carried in his bill. He stopped to rest a minute in a tree that grew on the very edge of that clump of ferns. Sammy had hidden many sweet, brown little beechnuts in many places and he couldn't quite make up his mind where to hide this particular one. As he sat there trying to think of a new place he grew careless and the fat, sweet little nut slipped out of his bill and fell down through the branches plump on Old Man Coyote hiding amongst the withered ferns,

Now that was a particularly fine little nut. It was the biggest and fattest one Sammy had found. He felt sure it was much the sweetest. He didn't want to lose it. So down flew Sammy after it. He saw just where it fell among the withered ferns and he was just about to drop among them when he saw something else. He saw the gray coat of Old Man Coyote.

With a harsh scream Sammy checked himself just in time and flew back up in the trees. Then how he did scream! His voice rang all through the Green Forest. Everybody stopped hunting nuts to listen.

"Thief! Thief! Thief!" screamed Sammy Jay at the top of his voice. "Everybody watch out for old Man Coyote! Here he is! Here he is! Thief! Thief! Thief!"

Old Man Coyote knew then that it was useless to hide longer. He got to his feet and glared up at Sammy Jay. If looks could hurt Sammy Jay certainly would have fallen right down dead that instant. But looks can't hurt and Sammy only screamed the louder.

Old Man Coyote was too angry for words. He was too upset and angry even to snarl. He simply turned, and with such dignity as he could trotted away. Sammy

followed him all the way to the edge of the Old Pasture, and by the sound of Sammy's voice all the other little people knew just where Old Man Coyote was going. He was going home.

STORY 1788. November 3, 1917

The End of the Beechnut Feast

Good times too soon are of the past;
A pity 'tis they do not last.

And yet is it a pity? If they lasted always, we wouldn't half appreciate them. And after all a good time is never wholly of the past because always you have the memory of it, and that is something no one can take away from you. The thing to do is to make the most of a good time while you can. If one good time lasted always there would be no other good times to look forward to.

Of course, the beechnut feast in the Green Forest had to come to an end. With so many sharp-eyed people looking for those sweet, brown little beech-nuts, it wasn't a great while before most of them had been found. But while they lasted the happiest place in all the Green Forest was right under the silver gray beech trees, especially after the first day, when Chatterer the Red Squirrel had made so much unpleasantness. After that first day Chatterer attended strictly to business. He was smart enough to know that if he would get his share, he could waste no more time quarreling.

At last, the little brown nuts were so scarce that they were hardly worth looking for. Buster Bear and Lightfoot the Deer no longer came. They had made the most of their opportunity, and both were much fatter as a result. So were all the members of the Gobbler family and of the Grouse family. Now, they had scattered in quest of other good things. Chatterer the Red Squirrel had filled several storehouses and really had more beechnuts than he could possibly use. His cousin, Happy Jack, the Gray Squirrel, had stored away plenty against the day of need, and he had buried many more, thinking to dig them up later.

Some he undoubtedly would dig up but a great many he would forget all about. They would remain right where he had buried them until the coming of sweet Mistress Spring, and then from each one would spring up a tiny beech tree. So, though he didn't know it, Happy Jack had been the most useful of all those who had hunted for the little brown nuts. Years later, when those tiny trees have grown to big trees, the little people of the Green Forest of that time will have Happy Jack to thank for the feasts they will have each year.

Sammy Jay had eaten until he could eat no more and had stored away many for future use. Redhead the Woodpecker felt very fine and quite fit to move south when the weather should become too cold for comfort. So the place where the beech trees grew was quite deserted by all save Whitefoot the Wood Mouse. You see, his home is close by, and he still hunted for nuts which the others had overlooked, although his storehouse was so full that he had started to fill another. Whitefoot is thrifty. Best of

Illustrations. October 29 to November 3, 1917.

1783. Chatterer Proves Himself a Friend
Everybody who was there the day before was on hand this morning.

1784. Happy Jack has Reason to Thank Chatterer
Reddy did leave; he knew it was no use to stay.

1785. Old Man Coyote Tries His Luck
A fat young gobbler headed straight towards the clump of ferns.

1786. Buster Bear Does a Good Turn
They knew by Buster's little grunts that there must be plenty of nuts there.

1787. Sammy Jay Drops a Nut
He got to his feet and glared at Sammy Jay.

1788. The End of the Beechnut Feast
So the place where the beech trees grow was deserted by all save Whitefoot.

all, nothing had happened to any of the feasters. Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy, Old Man Coyote and Hooty the Owl had tried in vain to catch one of them. And so when the good times ended there were no unhappy memories.

You see, Reddy Fox and Mrs. Reddy and Old Man Coyote found plenty to eat elsewhere. They didn't go hungry. Oh my, no! They were simply disappointed, but their disappointment meant that nothing dreadful happened to the other little people. So the beechnut feast was a great success, and because of it many little people of the Green Forest were better prepared for the coming of Jack Frost and rough Brother North Wind.

STORY 1789. November 5, 1917

Peter Rabbit Finds Lightfoot in Trouble

For some time, Peter Rabbit had seen nothing of Lightfoot the Deer. In fact, he had had only one glimpse of him since the feast of beechnuts. Peter is a great admirer of Lightfoot. To Peter's way of thinking Lightfoot is the most beautiful of all four-footed people. He never tires of admiring him, his magnificent spreading antlers crowning his handsome head, his great, soft eyes, his trim form, his slender legs, his dainty steps and wonderful leaps. Beside him Peter always feels very small and of little account. How anyone can want to harm such a glorious creature is more than Peter can understand.

Now had come the dreadful season when it seemed as if men with terrible guns were everywhere. From daylight to dark those terrible guns banged and banged on the Green Meadows, in the Green Forest, and along the Big River. No one knew what minute he might have to run or fly for his life. Only on the land which belonged to Farmer Brown was there safety, for Farmer Brown's boy had posted all this land with signs forbidding hunting thereon.

So Peter Rabbit, who never travels beyond Farmer Brown's land anyway, had little to fear from those terrible guns. Nevertheless, every time he heard one, he had a queer sinking feeling at the pit of his stomach. You see, there had been a time when even Farmer Brown's land had not been a safe place and Peter had known what it means to be hunted. That was before Farmer Brown's boy had learned how much greater is the joy of friendship with the people of the Green Forest and Green Meadows than the cruel pleasure of hunting them.

But if Peter had little to fear, many of his friends and neighbors were not so fortunate, for their travels in quest of food often took them beyond Farmer Brown's land. Not a day passed that Peter did not hear tales of frightful things happening, of narrow escapes, and all too often of surprises which left no chance of escape. So every time Peter heard the bang of a gun, no matter how distant, he jumped nervously and hoped that no friend of his had suffered.

Peter was thinking of these things this particular evening as he scampered along, lipperty-lipperty-lip, through the Green Forest. He was wishing that all his friends would learn to stay on Farmer Brown's land all the time through the dreadful hunting

season. With his head filled with such thoughts, he was passing a little thicket of young hemlock trees growing so near together that their spreading branches quite hid the ground and made a splendid hiding place. Into the midst of Peter's thoughts a faint sound broke. It was very faint. Perhaps if his ears had been less long Peter wouldn't have caught it. But he did catch it, and he stopped abruptly to sit up and listen intently.

There it was again, very faint, a strange noise such as Peter never had heard before. It came from the middle of that little hemlock thicket. Peter made ready to run. That strange noise, faint though it was, frightened him. A strange noise always frightens him. But he didn't run. He waited to hear it again. Curiosity was stronger than fear. He would run when he was sure there was something to run from.

Peter continued to hear that faint sound, and presently he just had to try to see who was making it. Carefully, very, very carefully, taking care not to rustle a leaf, he crept into that thicket a step at a time. Presently he discovered a familiar shape lying there. It was Lightfoot the Deer. It was Lightfoot who was making those queer sounds, little gasping moans. Lightfoot was in great trouble.

STORY 1790. November 6, 1917

Peter Rabbit is Horrified

To be horrified is to be filled with horror, and horror, you know, is a state of feeling produced by something dreadful. When Peter Rabbit discovered Lightfoot the Deer lying hidden in the thicket of young hemlock trees and making little gasping moans, he didn't at first understand what it meant. Those little moans gave him a feeling that something was wrong, but still, he didn't quite understand them. He saw his big friend whom he so much admired lying there, and at once all uneasiness left him. He had nothing to fear from Lightfoot.

So Peter boldly crept nearer. "Hello. Lightfoot," said he; "I haven't seen you for some time and have been wondering what had become of you. What are you making that queer noise for?"

Slowly, very slowly, as if it was all he could do, Lightfoot turned his beautiful head with its wonderful branching antlers and looked at Peter. Then Peter saw in Lightfoot's great, soft, beautiful eyes such a look of suffering that he knew instantly that Lightfoot was in great trouble. Peter's heart was filled with great pity.

"O, Lightfoot!" he cried, "what is it? Are you hurt?"

Lightfoot nodded and gave a little gasp of pain. Peter drew nearer that he might see Lightfoot better. A ray of moonlight stole down through the branches of the little hemlock trees and rested on Lightfoot so that Peter could see him quite clearly. Along one shoulder and side of Lightfoot's gray coat were dark stains and the hair was all matted and stiff. Peter stared. It was hard to believe what his eyes told him he saw.

"O!" he cried softly and pityingly. "O, Lightfoot, you are hurt!"

Lightfoot nodded and tried to lick the wounds, for it was from wounds that those

dark stains came. They were made by blood which had dried on that fine gray coat. And still Peter stared and stared. The fact is, he was horrified. Lightfoot, the most beautiful of all the four-footed people of the Green Forest, was lying there hurt, too hurt to even speak! It was unbelievable, and yet it was true. Do you wonder that Peter was horrified?

And in Lightfoot's great, beautiful eyes was such misery and suffering! It was dreadful. Peter longed with all his heart to do something for Lightfoot, but there was nothing he could do. He could do nothing at all but be sympathetic, and you may be sure he was this. He was fairly bursting with sympathy, but he didn't know how to express all he felt. And it didn't seem as if just sympathy could be of any help to poor Lightfoot.

But it was. True sympathy always helps. Lightfoot had been lying there alone so long that it did him good just to see Peter Rabbit. It didn't take away any of the pain, but somehow it made the pain easier to bear. It was helpful just to have a friend near. You know it is dreadful to suffer all alone, and this is just what Lightfoot had been doing.

"Did you meet with an accident?" asked Peter timidly.

"No," replied Lightfoot, "I was shot."

"By a hunter with a terrible gun?" cried Peter.

Lightfoot nodded, and a wild, hunted look crept into his eyes. "Tell me, Peter," he whispered. "You didn't see one anywhere near here, did you?"

STORY 1791. November 7, 1917

Lightfoot's Sad Tale

When Peter Rabbit saw the wild, hunted look in Lightfoot the Deer's great soft eyes as he asked if Peter had seen a hunter anywhere near the Green Forest, he hurriedly told him that he hadn't and that he was sure that there wasn't one there and wouldn't be. You see, Peter had learned that hunters no more came on Farmer Brown's land, and this part of the Green Forest belonged to Farmer Brown. Lightfoot looked relieved but still uneasy and a little doubtful.

"I wish I could be sure, absolutely sure," said he. "You never can tell about these hunters with terrible guns. They haven't any hearts. They haven't any feelings. If one should find me here, hurt as I am, and unable to run, he would shoot me and act as if he thought he had done a great thing, something to be proud of. You are sure, quite sure, Peter, that none is about here?"

Once more Peter told Lightfoot that there were no hunters in that part of the Green Forest and begged him to worry no more about that.

"All right," replied Lightfoot. "I'll try not to. But it is hard work not to. It's very hard work not to. These hunters are bad enough when one is feeling well and strong,

but when one is helpless, as I am now, the thought that one of them may be near is enough to drive me crazy. Just think, if one should find me now. I couldn't do a thing for myself. O, dear! I wish I hadn't gone for a drink early this morning."

"Was that when it happened?" asked Peter sympathetically.

Lightfoot nodded. "Yes," said he, "that is when it happened. Wouldn't you think that those hunters would have enough sense of fairness and justice to allow me a chance to drink? But they haven't. They seem to think of nothing but killing and don't care how they go about it. Ever since the terrible guns began to bang this Fall I have been uneasy and on the watch constantly. At first, I was safe enough. Those hunters were after Bob White and Mrs. Grouse and Mrs. Quack and not after me. It is so every year. But every year there comes a time when for a little while they hunt me, and the others are safe. The trouble is I never can tell just when that time will begin. This year it began this morning. Oh, if only I had known!"

Lightfoot sighed heavily and once more licked his wounds. After a few minutes he continued:

"You know, my favorite drinking place is the Laughing Brook."

Peter nodded.

"Well, just at break of day I went there, as usual, for my morning drink. I had no thought of danger there. In the first place it was so very early. Then I didn't dream that any hunter knew of it. So I wasn't expecting danger there, and perhaps I was a wee bit careless. I had just put my lips to the water when from behind a tree a little way off there came a terrible bang, and then another, and things struck me on my shoulder and side and hurt dreadfully. At first, I was too frightened to feel the pain as I felt it later. I leaped across the Laughing Brook and ran, and as I did so I saw a hunter step out from behind that tree and in his hands was a terrible gun, the kind of gun that shoots many bullets at once instead of one."

Lightfoot meant a shotgun instead of a rifle was used, a thing hunters do in some places, though it never should be allowed. A shotgun is likely to make terrible wounds and not kill at once if the hunter is not close to his victim. It means dreadful suffering, far more than the single bullet from a rifle will cause, though that is bad enough.

"I saw the hunter start to follow, and I ran and ran," continued Lightfoot. "Then I felt myself growing weak, so I circled around until I reached this place. I couldn't go a step farther, so I crept in here and hid and I am afraid that I shall never leave it alive."

"Don't say that, Lightfoot! Don't say that!" cried Peter in distress.

STORY 1792. November 8, 1917

Matters are not so Bad as Lightfoot Fears

When things seem bad, so very bad
That worse they could not be;

Hold fast to hope; cling hard to faith,
That some way out you'll see.

Poor Lightfoot the Deer, wounded and alone in a thicket in the Green Forest, had given up all hope before Peter Rabbit arrived. He was weak, faint and in great pain from the wounds which had been made by the terrible gun of a hunter early that morning. All day he had suffered there alone and he had felt sure that never again would he lightly bound through the Green Forest proudly hold his handsome head high as he had done in the past. He was thirsty, so terribly thirsty that at times he almost forgot the pain of his wounds. Yet he hadn't the strength to get up and go to the Laughing Brook. Even if he had he wouldn't have dared to, because of the danger that the hunter who had shot him right be lurking near.

Then in the early evening had come Peter Rabbit and found him there. Of course, there was nothing that Peter could do to ease the pain or to help Lightfoot to get water. Nevertheless, Peter did help. He didn't know it, but he did. It always helps to have a friend near, a friend full of sympathy. Somehow after a little Lightfoot did not feel quite so hopeless. It did him good to talk, and it did him good to have Peter talk to him.

"Don't say that you are afraid you'll never leave here alive," begged Peter. "I know you are dreadfully hurt, but perhaps things are not so bad as they seem. I ate something in Farmer Brown's garden once that made me so sick I thought I should die, but I didn't."

Peter, you remember, once ate a lot of young plants which had been sprayed with poison to kill worms and bugs[37].

"You can't get well if you don't try to, you know," he added.

"I would give anything in the world for a drink," panted Lightfoot, "but even if I could, I wouldn't dare try to get one. That hunter with his terrible gun may be watching at the Laughing Brook."

"Not now," declared Peter in a most decided way. "It is night now, and that hunter has gone home. Hunters with terrible guns don't hunt at night except for Bobby Coon. Besides, as I told you before, there is no danger on Farmer Brown's land because he doesn't allow hunting, and you are on his land now. The Laughing Brook is only a little way from here. Don't you suppose you can try to get there? I will go see that the way is clear if that will make you feel better."

Lightfoot was sure that he couldn't stand, let alone walk, but after Peter had urged him to try, and when he felt he couldn't stand that dreadful thirst any longer, he did try to get up. He found that though it hurt and he was very stiff all over he could stand, and after a few painful efforts he found he could walk. Peter raced ahead to make sure that all was safe. Of course, he found it was and hurried back to tell Lightfoot.

Slowly and painfully Lightfoot hobbled over to the Laughing Brook. O, how good that water tasted! It seemed to him that he never had known how good water is. When he had enough, he hobbled back to his hiding place. Somehow things seemed different

37 STORY 1360, 1916.

now. He did not feel so hopeless. That drink had made a great difference, all the difference in the world.

STORY 1793. November 9, 1917

Friendly Neighbors

Back in his hiding place in the thicket of hemlock trees in the Green Forest, with Peter Rabbit to keep him company, Lightfoot the Deer began to have a little hope despite the dreadful aching of his wounds. He had found that he I could move it if he tried. It hurt to do so, but he could do it. Then that long, cool drink at the Laughing Brook had seemed to put new life in him. He began to feel that perhaps if he were careful, Old Mother Nature might in time heal the wounds made by the hunter's terrible gun. The one thing that worried him most, the one great fear, was that a hunter might come that way and find him helpless. The very thought of it brought terror to his eyes.

But for that night at least he felt reasonably safe, for he knew that it was as Peter said; hunters with terrible guns wanted the light of day for their pitiless work. When the first Jolly Little Sunbeams came dancing through the Green Forest the great fear took possession of him again. He lay with his head pointing in the direction from which the Merry Little Breezes came, testing them with his delicate nose for a suggestion of the dreaded man scent. His big ears were set to catch every sound and in his great, soft, beautiful eyes was that fearful, hunted, anxious look.

By and by the faint bang of a distant gun was brought to him by the Merry Little Breezes. Lightfoot trembled all over and the look of terror grew in his eyes. He felt that he must get up and run and he knew that he couldn't. So he lay still and trembled. From time to time, he heard those distant bangs, and each time he shook with fear. You see, he knew just what those bangs meant. They meant that someone very likely was killed, or if not killed was perhaps suffering as he had suffered from pain and fright.

So the morning slowly passed, and presently Lightfoot had visitors. The first was Sammy Jay. Sammy has a way of peering into all sorts of places, and he just happened to stop in that little thicket. Of course he discovered right away that something was wrong with Lightfoot, and he soon had the whole story,

"It's sad business, sad business," said Sammy soberly. "I certainly am sorry for you, Lightfoot. But you are lucky to be no worse off than you are. I've seen some dreadful things happen from those terrible guns. But you are safe here, quite safe. No hunters come here. Just you keep quiet and attend to getting well. I'll warn you if any danger comes near."

Lightfoot thanked Sammy. He knew that Sammy would do just as he had promised. More than once had Sammy given him timely warning. Hardly had Sammy Jay left when Mrs. Grouse stole into the thicket.

"O, excuse me, Lightfoot," said she politely. I didn't know any one was here. I've often hidden in here, and I thought I would spend the rest of the morning here. It's one of the safest places I know of."

Then she saw that Lightfoot was hurt. She looked at him very hard for a minute, her bright little eyes taking him all in. “Did a hunter with a terrible gun hurt you?” she demanded.

Lightfoot nodded miserably, and Peter Rabbit told Mrs. Grouse all about it.

“It’s shameful,” declared Mrs. Grouse. “I guess you know that I know all about it. Until Farmer Brown’s boy stopped hunters from coming over here, I never knew a moment in Autumn when I felt safe except in the night. And more than once I’ve been hurt by those terrible guns. It’s a mercy that I’m alive now to tell about it. But don’t worry, Lightfoot. You are safe here. No hunters will come here. Farmer Brown’s boy will not let them.”

So Lightfoot’s friendly neighbors tried to ease his mind, and at last he went to sleep, for he was quite worn out.

STORY 1794. November 10, 1917

Mother Nature’s Healing Touch

It was even as Peter Rabbit and Sammy Jay and Mrs. Grouse had told Lightfoot the Deer. He was safe, quite safe, in that thicket of young hemlock trees in that part of the Green Forest which belonged to Farmer Brown. On a big tree in plain sight was a sign which forbade all hunting on that land. Of course, Lightfoot couldn’t read that sign. If he could have read it, he might have felt easier in mind. Neither could Peter Rabbit or Sammy Jay Sammy Jay or Mrs. Grouse read that sign, but they had discovered for themselves that ever since it had been there no hunters had come that way, and they had felt sure that Lightfoot was safe and had told him so.

Now Old Mother Nature keeps a watchful eye on all her children and she knew at once what had happened to Lightfoot. It was she who prompted him to lick those dreadful wounds male by the shot from the hunter’s terrible gun. In doing this he freed them of all dirt and this meant a better chance for them to heal. Of course, the little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows have no doctors to help them. Old Mother Nature is their doctor and a wonderful doctor she in. She proved this now with Lightfoot.

With gentle touch she healed his wounds. By means of the fear of being seen by another hunter she kept him quiet in his hiding place that his wounds might have a chance to heal. By taking away his appetite she removed the chief cause for desire to move about. So she had a chance to heal the wounds made by those cruel shot. Where the skin had been torn she made new skin grow.

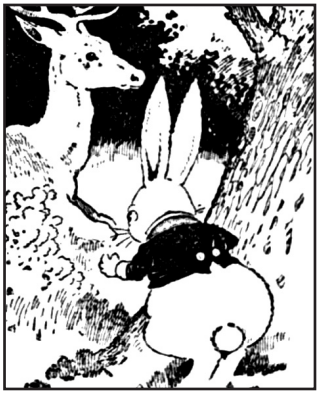
After a couple of days, when the healing had well started, she gave him back a little appetite, for if he lay too long without moving about, he would grow stiff. Besides, he needed food then to give him strength. Of course he suffered. No one can be hurt as he was and not suffer a great deal. When he began to move about, he was at first very stiff and sore, and every movement hurt. But little by little this wore off and he felt more and more like his old self. You see, no bones had been broken by

Illustrations. November 5 to November 10, 1917.

1789. Peter Rabbit Finds Lightfoot in Trouble
Presently he discovered a familiar shape lying there.

1790. Peter Rabbit is Horrified
"Hello, Lightfoot," said he: "I haven't seen you for some time."

1791. Lightfoot's Sad Tale
"I saw the hunter start to follow me, so I ran and ran," continued Lightfoot.



1792. Matters are not so Bad as Lightfoot Fears
"I would give anything in the world for a drink," panted Lightfoot.

1793. Friendly Neighbors
"It's sad business, sad business," said Sammy soberly.

1794. Mother Nature's Healing Touch
On a big tree in plain sight was a sign which forbade all hunting on that land.

those cruel shot. Had bones been broken, Mother Nature could not have mended those without help.

The days slipped by and the pain ceased. Lightfoot tried a low leap over a log and found he could do it. His heart grew light, for he had feared that he would never be able to run and leap as once he had done. So Old Mother Nature healed his wounds with her gentle touch until once more Lightfoot was strong, and carried his handsome head high, and ran and leaped as of old, and all his friends rejoiced. Only on his shoulder was a long white mark to tell that a cruel shot had plowed along there.

But in Lightfoot's heart was a great fear from which he never would be free, and a great distrust—the fear and distrust of man. Never again would he have faith in man though he carried no terrible gun and did his best to appear friendly. Though he could not understand why it should be, man was his enemy. And with this fear and distrust grew a wonderful cunning. Never again would a hunter be able to surprise Lightfoot. He had learned a bitter lesson, and one he would never forget.

And often as he lay hidden in a thicket he would say over and over to himself: "What sort of creatures can these hunters be that they find pleasure in making those who are helpless and harmless suffer as I have suffered?"

And the pine trees would whisper softly: "Heartless. Heartless."

STORY 1795. November 12, 1917

Paddy the Beaver does a Little Studying

Peter Rabbit wouldn't be thoroughly happy if he thought he was missing anything going on among his neighbors. It was born in Peter to want to know all that goes on. So it happened that one day he remembered Paddy the Beaver and that it was a long time since he had been over to Paddy's pond. Right away Peter made up his mind that he would visit Paddy at once. If he didn't, Jack Frost would freeze Paddy's pond and then it would be too late. So the first chance he got, off scampered Peter, lipperty-lipperty-lip, straight for the pond of Paddy the Beaver, deep in the Green Forest.

He found Paddy there. Of course, Paddy is a great home body. The only time he leaves his home is in the Summer, when he sometimes goes exploring down the Laughing Brook. So Peter found Paddy sitting on the end of his dam, Paddy was gazing across his pond. He nodded to Peter and then paid no further attention to him. Peter fidgeted about for a while and then ventured to speak.

"You seem to have something on your mind," said he

"I have," replied Paddy. "I'm studying."

"Studying!" exclaimed Peter. "For goodness sake what are you studying

I'm studying to make up my mind what I had best do," replied Paddy gravely.

"Do about what?" asked Peter, looking puzzled.

"Do about getting the rest of my food supply," replied Paddy. "What would you do

if you were in my place, Peter?"

Peter chuckled. "I wouldn't do anything," said he, and he told the truth. You know there is no one quite so happy-go-lucky as Peter Rabbit. He never worries about the future. He doesn't think about it at all. He is content to take things as they come. This is why he sometimes goes hungry when his wiser neighbors, who have laid up storer of food, have plenty to eat.

"But I've got to do something," replied Paddy. "My food supply out there in my pond isn't big enough to last all Winter, and I've got to add to it."

"Then why don't you get busy and cut some more trees," asked Peter. "There seems to me to be plenty of them." You know Paddy lives on the bark of aspen and poplar and willow and alder trees but prefers aspen.

"Yes," assented Paddy, "there is no lack of trees. The question is how am I to get my logs to the water after I have cut them? I have already cut all the aspen trees close to my pond and to the canal I dug last year. There is a grove of young aspens over yonder I would like to get into, but I am afraid it would take me too long to drag the logs to the water. It would be too hard work and too dangerous as well.

"Old Man Coyote might surprise me there, and he could catch me easily so far from water. I'm studying whether to build my dam bigger and so make my pond bigger and force the water back nearer to those young aspen trees, or whether to dig a canal to that little grove. It is a question which will be best and which I can do the quickest. I've got to finish harvesting my food supply before ice comes. So I'm studying."

Peter backed away. "Excuse me," said he politely. "I won't bother you now." Then he turned and scampered off, resolving to come back in a day or two to find out what Paddy would decide to do.

STORY 1796. November 13, 1917

Paddy Makes Up His Mind

Make up your mind just what you'll do
  And then go out and do it.
Who puts things off and can't decide
  Is almost sure to rue it.

Paddy the Beaver didn't waste a great deal of time trying to decide what he should do. He studied the matter over carefully. He went over to the little grove of aspen trees he wanted to cut for food and which were too far away from the water for him to think of cutting as matters then were. He looked over the ground to see if he could dig a canal to them. Then he went back to his dam and walked back and forth on that, wondering how much bigger he would have to make it in order to make his pond enough larger to reach those aspen trees. Then, as he gnawed the bark from an aspen branch, he made up his mind. He would make his dam longer, to begin with.

Once his mind was made up Paddy went to work. That is his way. You know,

there is no better worker than Paddy the Beaver. He loves his work, and he does it thoroughly, the very best he can. So now he worked with might and main, and when Peter Rabbit returned a few days after his first visit he found that Paddy already had done a great deal.

Peter found Paddy adding to one end of his dam around which the water from his pond had run in a little stream. He was bringing sticks and putting them in place and piling mud on them. He was too busy to talk, and so Peter simply sat and admired, Paddy would swim to the upper end of his pond and tug a big stick into the water.

Then he would swim with it down to the dam and pull it into place with the biggest end pointing downstream. He was very particular about this. Back and forth, back and forth, he traveled until it made Peter tired just to watch him. How anyone could work so hard and so steadily was more than Peter could understand.

Presently Peter noticed that the water had stopped running around the end of the dam. Two nights later, when Peter came over, he could see for himself that Paddy's pond had grown. The water was quite up to certain bushes and young trees which had been quite a bit back from it before. So the work went on and little by little the distance between the water and those young aspen trees Paddy was so anxious to cut for food grew less.

Ever since Peter had made the acquaintance of Paddy the Beaver he had admired him. Now he admired him more than ever. He remembered what Paddy had said about the difficulty and danger of trying to get those aspen trees to the water after cutting them. Instead of doing this Paddy was taking the water to the trees.

"I never should have thought of that!" exclaimed Peter.

"What wouldn't you have thought of?" asked Paddy, stopping to rest and nibble a bit of bark.

"Of such a simple idea as making the water creep over to the trees when it was going to be such hard work to take the trees to the water," replied Peter.

That's because you don't use your head, Peter," grinned Paddy. "If you study a thing, you will almost always find that there is more than one way to do it, and that one is better than the other. I see the water is pretty near the top of my dam, so I guess I've made my pond as big as I can without building my dam higher, and that would take too long. I'll have to try another plan now to make it quite safe for me to cut those trees."

"What will you do now?" asked Peter, brimming over with curiosity.

"Wait and see," retorted Paddy, and swam away toward the shore nearest the place where the young aspen trees grew.

STORY 1797. November 14, 1917

Peter's Admiration is Unbounded

It was several days before Peter Rabbit again got over for a call on Paddy the

Beaver. You see, Peter couldn't be everywhere at once. Certainly not. No one can be everywhere at once. And there was so much going on these busy Fall days that Peter almost ran his legs off trying to see everything. A great many times he wondered what Paddy would do next now that he had made his pond as big as he could and still those aspen trees were too far from the water to be cut and hauled in safety.

At last he found a chance to run over to see what Paddy had been doing. It was early evening and quite dark in the depths of the Green Forest. As he drew near Paddy's Pond, he heard a sound that for a moment startled him. It was the crash of a falling tree. There was no wind, and so that tree could not have been blown over. Then Peter remembered.

"Of course," said he to himself, "Paddy has begun cutting those aspen trees. No one but Paddy or a man can cut down a tree, and there wouldn't be a man in the woods at this time of day. Besides I would have heard him chopping. That tree was cut down by Paddy."

Then Peter ran faster than ever, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty lip, through the Green Forest and at last came out on the shore of the pond of Paddy the Beaver. No one was in sight. He could see the roof of Paddy's house standing out in the water, but there was no sign of Paddy.

"He's over among those young aspen trees," thought Peter, and hurried on. He ran across the top of Paddy's dam and around the shore on the other side until he was nearly opposite the little grove of young aspen trees he knew Paddy had set his heart on having for food during the Winter. Suddenly right in front of him he saw a little ditch of water. It was a very nicely made little ditch. The earth was piled neatly along one side. Peter knew what it was. It was a canal, a new canal dug by Paddy the Beaver.

Peter turned and followed that canal, hopping alone the bank. It led straight toward those aspen trees. When he reached the end, he was right at the edge of that little grove, and there, just as he expected, was a newly fallen tree, and Paddy hard at work cutting off the branches. Peter looked at Paddy, then at the aspen trees, and finally at the little canal at his feet. In his eyes unbounded admiration grew and grew. He understood now what Paddy's plan was to get the water near enough to those trees after his pond had stopped spreading in that direction; it was the digging of that canal.

"Well," said Paddy with twinkling eyes, "what do you think of it?"

"I think it is wonderful," sighed Peter. "However did you think of it?"

"It is my business to think," replied Paddy quietly. "If I didn't use my head a little, I would starve to death or else furnish a good dinner for Old Man Coyote. By the looks of things, I shall have plenty to eat this Winter if Jack Frost doesn't freeze the water before I can get this out to my food pile in the pond. I haven't got any time to waste, that is certain." Paddy fell to work again harder than ever, and Peter at down to watch and admire.

STORY 1798. November 15, 1917

Peter Gets a Lesson in Logging

Paddy the Beaver is a member of the oldest logging family in the world. Before man learned to cut trees and make them into logs to be used for building a house or for other purposes Paddy's ancestors were logging in the Green Forest. They were cutting down trees and then cutting these into logs, and after they had eaten the bark from them, they were using them in building houses and dams. So it is no wonder that Paddy knows just how best to go about his work.

As Peter Rabbit sat watching Paddy cut into logs the aspen trees he had just cut down, he had to admire the way in which Paddy went about it. He couldn't help but admire. Of course, that tree had many branches. The first thing Paddy did was to cut off those branches close to the trunk. For the first time Peter realized what wonderful tools were those four yellow cutting teeth of Paddy's, two in the upper jaw and two in the lower jaw.

"I should hate to have him bite me," thought Peter as he watched Paddy with one bite cut off a branch as big as a man's finger. "I certainly would hate to feel those teeth. Why, he could take a leg off with a single bite!"

As Paddy cut off the branches he dragged them into the canal and swam with them out to his food pile in the pond. It took quite a while to do all this, but this particular tree wasn't a very big one or Peter never would have had the patience to remain. When the branches had been disposed of Paddy started to work on the trunk. About five feet from the end, he began to gnaw. Chip after chip he cut out with his great teeth while Peter looked on. Finally Peter grew tired of just watching, and Paddy wouldn't stop working to talk. Of course, he couldn't talk while he worked, because it was with his mouth he worked. So Peter went off to look for something to eat. When he returned, Paddy was just finishing that cut.

Then he pushed and pulled and rolled the log he had cut off until it was in the canal and ready to be floated out to the pond. Paddy stopped then to rest a few minutes for he was tired.

"Do you always cut a tree up that way?" asked Peter.

"Not always," replied Paddy. "If it stands on the edge of my pond so that when cut it falls into the water and it isn't too big for me to manage. I tow it out without cutting it up at all. That saves me a great deal of work."

"I should say so!" exclaimed Peter. "I should think you'd wish that all grew that way."

Paddy grinned. "If I did, I probably would get fat and lazy and forget how to work, said he.

"How do you make the sticks and logs stay under water?" asked Peter presently.

"That's easy enough." Paddy replied. "This kind of wood doesn't float long anyway. If I once get it out there it is bound to go to the bottom sooner or later. When a stick isn't too big for me to manage, I take it down and push it into the mud, or catch

it among sticks that are already down there. I always use the heaviest pieces for the bottom of my pile. Sometimes when aspens are scarce, I cut willows, but these do not sink so easily.

"I use them for the top of the pile and tangle them in among the branches already below the surface."

Peter thought this over a few minutes. "It's all very wonderful," said he at last. "I don't see how you do it, Paddy. Really, I don't. But, O, what a lot of work!"

"Work doesn't hurt anyone," retorted Paddy, preparing to cut another, log.

STORY 1799. November 16, 1917

Paddy Shows Peter Something

Steadily Paddy the Beaver worked in the little grove of young aspen trees, and the grove grew smaller while Paddy's food-pile out in his pond grew larger. Every two- or three-nights Peter Rabbit would come over to see how he was getting on. One night as Peter sat in the moonlight looking on while Paddy worked, he noticed that Paddy had left standing a fine young aspen tree which grew close to Paddy's canal. This puzzled Peter. Here was this fine-looking tree close to the water, and instead of cutting it Paddy was cutting farther away where he must do a lot of tugging and pulling to get his logs down to the water.

Peter looked at that tree curiously. He wondered if it could be that something was the matter with it. If nothing was the matter with it why didn't Paddy cut it? Finally, his curiosity got the best of him. He simply must know about that tree.

"Paddy" said he, "isn't this a good tree?"

Paddy, who was just passing on his way back to cut another log, glanced at the tree carelessly. "So far as I know it is. It looks good to me. Why?" said he.

Then why don't you cut it instead of working so hard to get those logs which must be hauled so much farther?" asked Peter. "I suppose you must have a reason for not cutting it," he added.

"Yes," replied Paddy, "I've got a reason for not cutting it—a very good reason. In fact, I've got the very best reason in the world."

"Well, what is it?" asked Peter, as Paddy didn't seem inclined to say anything more.

Paddy's eyes twinkled with mischief. "Suppose, Peter," said he, "you try to find out that reason for yourself. You ought to see it at a glance. Anybody ought to. It's as plain as the nose on your face." With a little chuckle Paddy went on to resume his work.

Peter was puzzled. He stared very hard at that aspen tree. So far as he could see, it was like all other aspen trees. It wasn't too big: Paddy already had cut several that were bigger. It wasn't too small: Paddy had cut many smaller ones. In fact Paddy seemed

especially fond of small trees. He had told Peter that the bark of these was sweeter and more tender than on the big trees, and Peter could understand this for in Winter when snow is deep and food scarce Peter sometimes has to eat bark himself, and he always picks out young trees for this purpose.

He hopped all the way around his tree, staring at it with all his might, but he couldn't see the least reason in the world why Paddy should have left it. Finally, he was forced to give up and frankly said so. "I may be stupid, Paddy," said he, "but I can't see any reason in the world why you shouldn't cut that tree."

"Look up at the top," replied Paddy briefly.

Peter looked up at the top tipping his head way back to do so. He couldn't see that the top was any different from the tops of other aspen-trees. He said so. Paddy chuckled good-naturedly. "It isn't," said he. That tree is perfectly good all the way to the very top. I would like that tree, but I can't have it. Look up at that top again. Don't you see that it is leaning toward that hemlock tree?

"If I cut it, it will simply fall against that hemlock tree and be held here, and I will have all my work for nothing. When I was young, I made that mistake two or three times, but I don't do it anymore. That tree wouldn't fall and I couldn't make it fall, so what good would it be to me?"

Peter saw that Paddy was right. "I never should have thought of that!" he exclaimed.

"I have to think," replied Paddy quietly.

STORY 1800. November 17, 1917

Paddy Warns Peter to Stay Away

Peter Rabbit was so interested in the doings of Paddy the Beaver that he spent a great deal of his time over by Paddy's pond, deep in the Green Forest. He knew that Paddy liked to have him.

At least he thought he knew this. Paddy always seemed glad to see him. So just imagine how surprised Peter was when one night just after he arrived for his usual visit Paddy told him that he wished he would go straight home and not come any more.

"What's that?" cried Peter, not believing his own ears.

"Go home," replied Paddy. "Go home to the dear Old Briar-patch and don't come here anymore," replied Paddy.

"You—you don't really mean that. Tell me you don't really mean that," cried Peter in a voice that showed how hurt he felt.

"I do mean it," retorted Paddy. "I want you to now, right away, and not come back."

Peter looked at Paddy very hard to see if he might be joking, but Paddy seemed so

very much in earnest that Peter felt that he meant every word he said.

"Won't you tell me why you want me to go? What have I done that you no longer want me around?" he asked. "I—I thought we were good friends, Paddy."

"We are," replied Paddy. "You are one of the best friends I've got, and it is because I think so much of you that I want you to do just what I have told you to. The truth is, Peter, it isn't safe for you to be here."

Peter's eyes opened wide with surprise, "Why isn't it safe?" he demanded. "Are you afraid that Old Man Coyote or Reddy Fox or Hooty the Owl will catch me? If you are, just stop worrying."

"I've kept out of their clutches so far and I guess I can continue to. I know them."

Paddy shook his head. "It isn't Old Man Coyote or Reddy Fox or Hooty the Owl," said he. "I guess you are able to take care of yourself so far as they are concerned. The fact is, Peter, there is a stranger here in this part of the Green Forest and I suspect he is more dangerous for you than any of the others."

"A stranger!" cried Peter, his eyes popping out more with surprise than fear. "Who is he? What is he like? Have you seen him?"

Paddy just had to laugh at the way Peter's questions tumbled over each other.

"No," said he, answering the last question first. "No, I haven't seen him."

"Then how do you know he is here? How do you know who he is? How do you know he is dangerous?" Peter was fairly burning with curiosity.

"Do you always have to see people to know that they are about?" asked Paddy in his turn.

"No—o," replied Peter slowly. "Of course not," he added. "Sometimes there are signs."

Paddy nodded. "Right, Peter," said he. "Sometimes there are signs and they tell all it to necessary to know. Come with me and I will show you something. Then I guess you will be ready to do what I have asked you to do—go home to the dear Old Briar patch and keep away from here."

STORY 1801. November 19, 1917

What Peter Saw

Peter Rabbit was filled with mixed feelings. In the first place he was bubbling over with curiosity. Then he was a little afraid after all that Paddy the Beaver had said. You remember Paddy had told Peter that there was a stranger in the Green Forest and that the wisest thing Peter could do would be to go straight home to the Dear Old Briar Patch and keep away from the Green Forest. But though he knew that Paddy was in earnest and meant every word of what he said, Peter couldn't make up his mind to do this until he had learned more about the dangerous stranger in the Green Forest. Paddy

Illustrations. November 12 to November 17, 1917.

1795. Paddy the Beaver does a Little Studying
"Studying!" exclaimed Peter. "For goodness sake. What are you studying?"

1796. Paddy Makes Up His Mind "I never should have thought of that!" exclaimed Peter."

1797. Peter's Admiration is Unbounded
"Well," said Paddy, with twinkling eyes, "what do you think of it?"

1798. Peter Gets a Lesson in Logging
"Do you always cut a tree up that way?" asked Peter.

1799. Paddy Shows Peter Something
Peter was puzzled—he stared very hard at that aspen tree.

1800. Paddy Warns Peter to Stay Away
"Go home," replied Paddy. "Go home to the dear Old Briar-patch and don't come here anymore."

had admitted that he hadn't seen this stranger, but he had seen signs of him and these signs told him quite all he needed in order to know.

But Peter is like a lot of people: he wants to see things for himself. He didn't doubt Paddy, but he wanted to see those signs. So Paddy had agreed to show Peter something.

"Run across my dam to the other end and wait for me there," said Paddy.

So Peter scampered across the dam while Paddy swam in the same direction. You know Paddy never travels on land when he can get to a place by swimming. He is one of the firmest believers in "safety first" of whom I know, and he is safe in the water, but not always safe on land.

When Peter reached the end of the dam, he looked this way and looked that way while he waited for Paddy, but look as he would, he could see nothing unusual. But he didn't have long to wait. You know Paddy swims very fast and he was only a moment or two behind Peter in reaching the end of the dam. In his turn he looked this way and looked that way, but he was looking for a different purpose. He was looking to make sure that no danger was near. Then he listened with all his might and at the same time tested the air with his nose. Paddy's ears and nose are better than his eyes and he depends more on them.

Satisfied that all was safe Paddy led the way a few steps along the shore of the pond to a little muddy place.

"Look," was all he said.

Peter looked and right in the middle of that little muddy place he saw something that made little cold chills run all over him. It was a footprint right in the middle of that muddy place, but a footprint such as Peter never before had seen. It was more nearly round than any other he knew of excepting that of Black Pussy, the cat at Farmer Brown's house. In fact, it was very much like one of Black Pussy's footprints which he had often seen in the snow, but was a little larger. He knew by this that it couldn't be one of hers. Besides, what would Black Pussy be doing so far in the Green Forest?

"Who made it?" whispered Peter.

"Yowler the Bobcat," replied Paddy promptly. "I would know that track anywhere. As I told you I haven't seen him, but I don't need to know that he has come to the Green Forest. That footprint is enough. Now you know why I told you to go home and stay there. It isn't safe for you over here anymore. Yowler is very, very fond of Rabbit. So the sooner you get away from here the better. And by the way, if you meet your cousin, Jumper the Hare, warn him."

STORY 1802. November 20, 1917

Peter Sees a Shadow

A shadow comes, a shadow goes,
And what it is nobody knows:

Nobody knows what it may be
Unless beyond it they can see.

Peter Rabbit was frightened. Just how frightened he was, he wouldn't have let Paddy the Beaver know for the world. The sight of that footprint of Yowler the Bobcat recalled to Peter all that he ever had heard about Yowler and his fondness for rabbit dinners. It recalled to Peter all that he had heard about Yowler's fierceness and the clever ways in which he hunts. He understood now just why Paddy was so insistent that he, Peter, should go home at once and keep away from the Green Forest. But he didn't want to appear frightened. He wished with all his might that he was at home that very minute. He dreaded the journey before him through the Green Forest. He felt like starting at once and running with all his might. But if he should do that, Paddy would think him a coward. At least he was afraid that Paddy would.

So Peter sat still right where he was and tried to appear unconcerned as he asked Paddy questions about Yowler, but all the time he was straining his ears to catch every sound and straining his eyes for the least suspicious movement.

Finally, Paddy announced that he had too much to do to waste any more time talking and with a final warning to Peter he slipped into the water of his pond and swam away. Peter watched him and wished that he could swim like that. If only he could, he would have no cause to worry on account of Yowler the Bobcat.

Paddy soon disappeared in the Black Shadows which lay across the pond and Peter turned to go home. Somehow, he dreaded that trip home through the Green Forest. He would have to pass dozens of places in any of which Yowler might be hiding ready to spring out and catch him. So, instead of starting at once, Peter sat perfectly still in the shadow of an old stump trying to make up his mind to go. Peter was in a dreadful fix. He didn't dare go and he didn't dare stay. Can you imagine anyone in a worse fix?

So he sat there perfectly still; his eyes and his ears were busy every minute. He heard nothing suspicious. It was very still there deep in the Green Forest by Paddy's Pond, and such occasional sounds as did reach Peter's ears he recognized. There was nothing in any of them to cause him to be alarmed. But presently, just as he had at last made up his mind to start, he saw a shadow where the moonlight lay on the shore of Paddy's Pond a little distance away. There were many shadows all about, but this one moved. At least Peter thought it did. He stared at it with all his might, while little cold shivers played tag up and down his back. Perhaps he had been mistaken; the shadow wasn't moving now. Peter grew hopeful, but he continued to sit perfectly still and to stare at that shadow.

By and by he made up his mind that he had been mistaken, and he was once more just about ready to start when the shadow moved again. This time he knew it did. There was no doubt at out it, not the least doubt in the world. It had moved and it had moved in his direction. Somebody was stealthily stealing along the shore of Paddy's pond. What should he do? Peter was in a panic.

STORY 1803. November 21, 1917

Peter Does the Wise Thing

What to do? That was the question—what to do? Peter Rabbit felt that he would be willing to give much to know the answer. Should he start for home, lipperty-lipperty-lip, as fast as he could? Should he keep perfectly still? Should he tip-toe away and try to find a hiding-place near? Which would be the wisest and best thing to do?

Peter tried to think it out, all the time keeping his eyes fixed on that moving shadow where the moonlight lay on the shore of the pond of Paddy the Beaver. If only he knew who made that shadow! It might be Reddy or Granny Fox. It might be Old Man Coyote. If it was either of these Peter felt quite equal to taking care of himself. He was so used to them that he knew just what to do to fool them and find safety. But it might be Yowler the Bobcat, own cousin to Tufty the Lynx, and very much like him. If it was—well, Peter shivered at the very thought. Worse still, he had a feeling that this was just who it was stealing along over there.

You see, Peter never had met with Yowler, and all he knew about him and his ways was what he had heard. But this was enough to make him very uncertain as to what he should do. He didn't know how fast Yowler could run or how far he could jump. He didn't know anything about Yowler's ways of hunting. And all the time he had a feeling, a most fearsome feeling, that the maker of that shadow was Yowler. After a while the shadow disappeared. Whoever had made that shadow had slipped back where the moonlight could not reach him and so make a shadow. Probably he was stealing soft-footed straight toward him through the bushes, Peter felt that he must run, run with all his might. He couldn't sit still any longer. Then something popped into his head-the memory of a certain hole under an old stump not far away. It was a hole in which he had hidden more than once before. Two thick old roots protected the entrance. No one could dig him out once he was safely inside.

"That's the place for me," thought Peter. "I can stay there the rest of the night and go back home to the dear Old Brier Patch by daylight. Somehow I feel that it will be safer for me in the daytime. I have an idea that Yowler hunts at night mostly. I wonder if it really was him who made that shadow."

Very carefully Peter stole away. He didn't rustle a leaf. He didn't move a single twig. He went slowly—so as not to. All the time he had a feeling that back in the darkness, someone else was moving just as silently and a great deal faster. He wanted to run, but he didn't dare to. At last, the old stump, with the hole under it was only a little way ahead. Peter could see it plainly.

A few jumps would take him there. Between him and the hole lay a little patch of moonlight. Across it, Peter sped as fast as ever he could, lipperty- lipperty-lip. He just couldn't stand it another minute to move as slowly as he had been doing.

Across the silvery patch of moonlight sped Peter and head first in at the welcome hole under the old stump. And even as he did so he caught a backward glimpse of a dark form leaping lightly out into the moonlight. A horrid scream rang in his ears, a scream that made him turn cold with fear. Down to the very end of that hole he crawled and there he lay and panted.

"I'm glad I came here," he sobbed, "I'm glad I didn't try to go home tonight. That must have been Yowler and he would have caught me. I guess I did the wise thing."

He did. For once Peter, who so often does foolish things, did the wise thing.

STORY 1804. November 22, 1917

A Fascinating Tail

Peter Rabbit was thankful. He didn't know to whom he was thankful; he was just thankful, that was all. What for? For the thought that had prompted him to seek safety for the time being in this hole between the roots of the old stump instead of trying to go home to the dear Old Brier Patch.

"If I had tried to do that, he would have caught me," said Peter to himself as he shivered at the very end of the hole way underground. "As sure as little Rabbits hop, Yowler the Bobcat would have caught me. He almost caught me as it was. I didn't get here a jump too soon. No, sir, I didn't. What a dreadful scream he has! It is worse than that of Hooty the Owl. It made my hair stand right on end.

"Peter, you're safe now, but you are a long way from home. Yes, sir, you are a long way from home, and how you are going to get back there in safety, I don't know. Mrs. Peter has been forever warning you that something like this would happen if you persisted in going so far away from the dear Old Brier Patch. Now it has and I guess it serves you just right."

Peter's talk to himself was interrupted by a noise at the entrance to that hole. It was a long sniff, followed by the scratching of sharp claws on the roots that guarded the entrance, and then an angry spitting sound, just such a spitting sound as Peter had heard Black Pussy, the cat at Farmer Brown's, make when she was angry and disappointed, only this sound was much louder than Black Pussy ever made. Again the little chills chased each other all over Peter and he crouched down and made himself as small as possible at the end of the hole.

After that, for a long, long time Peter heard no sound whatever. Gradually the little chills stopped running over him. He was safe and he knew it. Just as long as he remained right where he was, he was safe. So, in a little while he was quite over his fright, and then curiosity began to take possession of him. He began to wish that he could see Yowler the Bobcat. The glimpse he had had as he raced for safety had been merely that of a bounding form almost at his heels. He wondered if Yowler was still waiting outside. He wondered if it would be safe to just peek out. The more he thought of this the more he wanted to try it. Almost without knowing it he crept a little way toward the entrance. Then he sat and listened. So little by little Peter crept up to the entrance, where he could look out between the two roots that guarded it.

Just in front was a little open space where the moonlight lay. He didn't dare go a step farther, so for a long time he sat looking out at this little open space and wondering where Yowler was. Suddenly, without a sound, a form crossed that open space. So silently and stealthily did it move that it seemed to drift across in the moonlight like a

shadow. At the farther side it crouched with its back to Peter. There it remained without motion save for one thing, a tail on which the moonlight fell so that Peter could see it clearly. That tail kept twitching, twitching, twitching. And such a tail as it was! It was a mere stump of a tail. For the size of its owner, it wasn't much more of a tail than Peter's own. Peter's eyes popped right out as he watched it twitch and twitch. That tail fascinated him. Always he had been just a wee bit ashamed of his own funny little tail, but here was someone else with not much more of a tail. Somehow Peter felt an almost friendly interest in Yowler the Bobcat as he watched that fascinating tail twitching in the moonlight.

STORY 1805. November 23, 1917

Peter Has a Good Look at Yowler

As Peter Rabbit sat just inside the hole under the big stump near the pond of Paddy the Beaver and watched the fascinating stump of a tail of Yowler the Bob Cat twitching in the moonlight, as Yowler crouched on the farther side of the little open space right in front of Peter, he remembered how he had seen the tip of Black Pussy's tail twitch when she was watching a bird or trying to steal up on Happy Jack Squirrel or Danny Meadow Mouse.

"Cats are all alike," muttered Peter. "They can't keep their tails still, however still they may keep the rest of themselves. If I know anything about it, Yowler sees something or has heard something over beyond and is watching for a chance to catch someone. I'm glad it isn't me. I wonder who it is."

Just then Yowler rose to his feet and trotted out in the moonlight where for the first time Peter had a good view of him, That view didn't make Peter feel |any easier in his mind. No, sir, it didn't. In the first place he looked big, bigger than Peter had expected, a great deal bigger than Black Pussy. His legs were longer and bigger. His body was much thicker. His coat wasn't black, but a beautiful yellowish brown spotted with dark brown or black markings. His chin and throat were white. Altogether he was a handsome fellow. Peter had to admit that. But when Peter got a good look at Yowler's face he shivered. It was such a cruel, savage looking face. Peter felt as if the eyes glaring out from it bored right through him.

Yowler trotted a few steps, then turned to look back. Peter noticed that those feet of Yowler's were almost as silent as the wings of Hooty the Owl. As Yowler stared back in the direction from which he had come, Peter could hear him growling. It was an ugly, snarling growl deep down in his throat, not loud enough to be heard very far. It was quite plain to Peter that Yowler was growling to himself and not for the benefit of anyone else.

"There is someone coming and it isn't any one Yowler wants to catch," thought Peter. "In fact, I don't believe it is any one Yowler cares to meet, to judge by the way he acts. I wonder who it can be."

Suddenly Yowler snarled and spit, then turned and ran swiftly to the foot of a tall

tree. There he paused to look back and there was such a fierce, ugly look in his eyes that Peter shivered. Once more he snarled and then up the tree he went as nimbly as ever Happy Jack Squirrel climbed a tree. Halfway up he stretched out flat on a big limb and Peter could see his eyes like two little balls of fire as he glared down toward the edge of the little moonlit opening.

Then Peter heard a noise in that direction, now and then the snap of a twig or the rustle of dry leaves. Someone was coming, someone who was careless of his steps, a sure sign that he was not hunting any of the little people of the Green Forest. Peter listened, trying to guess who it might be. Presently he grinned. There was only one who shuffled along like that.

"It's Buster Bear, and Yowler is afraid of him," thought Peter, and somehow it made him feel better to know that there was some one Yowler was afraid to meet.

A few minutes later, sure enough, Buster Bear shuffled out into the moonlight.

STORY 1806. November 24, 1917

Peter Sees a Chance and Takes It

Watch for opportunity and seize it when you can:
Thus it is success is won by Quaddy or by man.

When Peter Rabbit saw Buster Bear shuffling out of the Black Shadows into the little moonlit open space in front of the old stump in a hole beneath the roots of which Peter was hiding, he didn't suspect that Buster was bringing him an opportunity. No, sir, he didn't suspect anything of the kind. It didn't enter his funny little head. He was interested, very much interested in the discovery that Yowler the Bob Cat was afraid of Buster. You know it always is rather pleasing to discover that someone you are afraid of is afraid of someone else, especially if that someone else is one you are not afraid of yourself.

Peter isn't afraid of Buster Bear. He isn't afraid of him, for the simple reason that he knows he can keep out of Buster's way and that Buster isn't going to waste any time trying to catch him. So when he saw Buster come shuffling out into the moonlight and knew that it was fear of Buster that had sent Yowler up in the big tree where he now lay stretched out on a great limb glaring down at Buster, he was rather tickled. He wondered what Yowler would do if Buster should take it into his head to climb that tree.

But Buster didn't do anything of the kind. The fact is he didn't know that Yowler was anywhere about. He was concerned wholly with his own affairs. Now it happened that there were some oak trees growing around the edge of that little open place, and on the ground were many sweet acorns. Buster has a fondness for sweet acorns, and he began to root around among the fallen leaves in quest of them. It was quite evident that he meant to stay there a while.

When Peter saw this, he also saw something else—his opportunity. It came to him

Illustrations. November 19 to November 26, 1917.

1801. What Peter Saw
It was a footprint right in the middle of that little muddy pool.

1802. Peter Sees a Shadow
There were many shadows all about, but this one moved.

1803. Peter Does the Wise Thing
Across the silvery patch of moonlight sped Peter and head first in the welcome hole.

1804. A Fascinating Tail
Peter crept up to the entrance where he could look out.

1805. Peter Has a Good Look at Yowler
Yowler trotted out into the moonlight where Peter had a good view of him.

1806. Peter Sees a Chance and Takes It
He didn't suspect that Buster was bringing him an opportunity.

like a flash. Yowler the Bob Cat was afraid of Buster and he would hardly be likely to come down from that tree while Buster was close by. Why not sip out and run for home? Here was his chance. If he could get a long enough start, he had no fear that Yowler could catch him.

Peter crept quite to the entrance and looked up at Yowler. Yowler's eyes were fixed on Buster Bear. Peter could see them glowing like tiny balls of fire, Peter crept out a few steps and around behind that old stump. Still Yowler glared down at Buster Bear. Peter took a long breath and with his heart in his mouth, as the saying is, away he went, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip, lipperty-lipperty-lip, as fast he could.

There was a rustle of dry leaves under Peter's feet. Buster Bear heard it and looked up for a minute. Then he grunted and continued looking for sweet acorns. Yowler the Bob Cat heard it and knew just what it meant. But Buster Bear was almost under him and all he could do was to glare harder than ever.

Lipperty-lipperty-lip raced Peter through the Green Forest and didn't stop once, which is very unusual for Peter. Quite out of breath he reached the edge of the Green Forest and before him lay the Green Meadows bathed in moonlight. A little way out was a dark spot. It was the dear Old Brier Patch. Never had it looked so good to Peter Rabbit. Across the Green Meadows he scampered and panting as he seldom had parted before he darted in under the friendly brambles and threw himself flat to get his breath and rest. He had made the most of his opportunity and he was safe at home at last.

STORY 1807. November 26, 1917

Yowler Studies His Neighbors

Yowler the Bob-Cat had come to the Green Forest by chance. His home had been among certain ledges on the Great Mountain. When he left it, he had no idea of staying away. Such an idea didn't enter his head. He simply started out hunting, just as usual. But hunt as he would, he could catch nothing on his usual hunting grounds. So he wandered farther and farther down toward the Green Forest until he came to the edge of it. There he hesitated. He was tempted to go on and he was inclined to go back. What do you think it was that decided him? It was the distant voice of Big Tom Gobbler.

Mr. Yowler entered the Green Forest and at last came to the pond of Paddy the Beaver. Not far away he discovered the rocky ledge in which Buster Bear makes his Winter home, though, of course, Yowler knew nothing of this then. It looked to him like a good place for a home, so he decided to stay a while. He could go back to the Great Mountain any time if he found the hunting in the Green Forest was poor. He picked out a little cave in the rocky ledge and then made himself quite at home.

"The next thing to do," thought Yowler, "is to find out who lives in the Green Forest and all about them. I've got to know whom to hunt and how to hunt them."

So the very first night after his arrival he started forth. Hardly was he outside of his cave when he heard the voice of Hooty the Owl. He grinned. "That sounds encouraging," said he to himself. "Where Hooty the Owl is there is sure to be good

hunting."

He stretched and yawned and then as silently as a shadow, he trotted over to the pond of Paddy the Beaver for a drink. It was while he was drinking that he saw Paddy for the first time. Paddy was big. He looked fat. The mere sight of him made Yowler's mouth water.

"I want that fellow," said he, "but I can't get him in the water. I wonder if he ever comes on land. I think I'll study him a bit and find out his habits. There is nothing like knowing the ways of your neighbors."

So Yowler climbed a big hemlock tree from which he could see all over Paddy's pond and, stretched out comfortably on a big limb, he watched Paddy. Paddy at this time was very busy getting his supply of food for Winter and, of course, Yowler discovered that in order to get this, Paddy had to go on shore. He studied Paddy's way of working, and he studied the little grove of aspen trees where Paddy was cutting his food logs and decided that it was best to wait until Paddy had cut the trees nearest the water and had to go back farther on land. Then he turned his attention to finding out who else lived in the Green Forest.

He caught mice enough to keep him from going hungry and sometimes by day and sometimes by night he prowled about, soft-footed, stealthy, studying the signs of his neighbors, trying to learn their habits. It didn't take him long to discover that the Grouse family lived in the Green Forest, but a greater discovery was that the Gobbler family lived there. The first glimpse he got of Big Tom Gobbler put all thoughts of Paddy the Beaver and all the others out of his head. Just as Old Man Coyote and Reddy Fox had done, he made up his mind that one of those Gobblers would make the most delicious of all dinners, but it didn't take him long to discover that that dinner would not be easily caught.

"I've got to find out all about their habits, where they feed, where they sleep, everything I can, and then we'll see," thought he. So Yowler began to spend all his spare time studying the Gobblers.

STORY 1808. November 27, 1917

Yowler Begins to Get Discouraged

When Yowler the Bobcat had found out all he thought he needed to know about the habits of the Gobbler family, he made his plans to catch one or more. Now Yowler's way of hunting is not like the way of Old Man Coyote or of Reddy Fox. They hunt fairly, depending on ears, eyes, nose and wits to catch their prey. Those they hunt have some chance if they are smart. But Yowler is a sneak, much like his cousins, Tufty the Lynx and Puma the Panther. He lies in wait, which is the meanest kind of hunting. He hides and then patiently waits for an unsuspecting victim to come along.

Having found out the favorite feeding grounds of the Gobblers he planned to hide close to one of them and then spring out and catch the first Gobbler who came within reach. So, just before the break of day, he hid close to one of these feeding places. You

see he had found out that the Gobblers feed early in the morning. He watched the Jolly Little Sunbeams creep through the Green Forest and chase out the Black Shadows. He heard a distant "gobble-obble-obble" and knew that the Gobblers were awake and he grinned a wicked grin and licked his lips as he thought of the good breakfast he felt sure of having. He heard Chatterer the Red Squirrel scolding. He heard Sammy Jay screaming in the distance and was glad that Sammy hadn't taken it into his head to come his way. Then all was still. Yowler waited and waited, his ears cocked for the sound of rustling leaves, which would warn him that the Gobblers were coming. But Yowler waited in vain. You see the Gobblers had gone to another feeding place that morning.

When Jolly Mr. Sun was so high in the blue, blue sky that Yowler knew it was useless to wait longer, he snarled his disappointment and went to look for a wood mouse.

The next morning he was back there again hiding as before. They didn't come. Once more they had gone to another place. On the following morning Yowler tried one of the other places. He knew by the way the leaves had been scratched up that this was the place where the Gobblers had been the morning before.

"This is the time I'll get one," thought he as he hid, and he licked his chops hungrily. But it seemed as if a good fairy must be watching over the Gobblers, for on this particular morning they went to the place where Yowler had waited so unsuccessfully the two mornings previous.

The same thing happened several times more. You see, Big Tom, the head of the Gobbler family, is rather smart himself. If he hadn't been smart, he never would or could have lived to grow into such a big, handsome fellow as he is. So, though Big Tom knew nothing about Yowler, not even that he had come to live in the Green Forest, he knew of others just as anxious for a turkey dinner, and so he had formed the habit of leading his family to various feeding-grounds, seldom twice in succession to the same one. It was this that upset Yowler's carefully laid plans.

Yowler was getting discouraged. It seemed as if his luck must change, but it didn't. So, then he decided to try another plan. He would hide in a tree right over one of the paths that the Gobblers used often and drop down on them. He knew just the tree for his purpose. He would try this new plan on the morrow.

STORY 1809. November 28, 1917

Almost, But Not Quite

Almost but not quite—how often it's so!
Almost, a wee slip, and you've missed, don't you know.

Having become quite discouraged with trying to catch the Gobblers on their feeding-grounds because somehow he couldn't guess which one they would go to, Yowler the Bob-cat decided to try another plan. He had set his heart (or should I say his stomach?) on having one of those handsome Gobblers to eat. He didn't care whether it

was for breakfast, dinner or supper, so long as he got one. It would taste equally good for either. Whenever he thought of them his mouth watered and he licked his lips. The result was that he was licking his lips most of the time.

In prowling about and studying the ways of the Gobblers he had discovered that they used certain paths quite often, some more than others. So Yowler's new plan was to stretch out on a branch of a big tree beside one of these paths, a branch which was right over the path. Then, when the Gobblers came along under him all he would have to do would be to drop on one of them. It seemed a very simple plan. It was a simple plan. To Yowler, who is a sneak and has no honor, it seemed a very good plan.

So he climbed a big tree beside the path which he knew the Gobblers used most often and stretched out flat along a big branch that hung over the path. There he lay as still as if he were part of the tree. Only the gleam in his fierce yellow eyes showed that there was any living thing there. He had waited long when at last he saw Big Tom Gobbler, and behind him all the other members of the Gobbler family coming along that path. Big Tom was cautious, very cautious. His keen eyes were watching on both sides, and from time to time he turned his head that he might better listen for suspicious sounds. Straight on he came. It was clear that he had no thought of danger from above.

Slowly and very carefully Yowler drew his feet under him in position for jumping. His eyes glowed. Nearer and nearer came the Gobblers. Yowler's stubby tail twitched with eagerness. Yowler felt that he was about to be rewarded for his long wait and for his former disappointments. In just one little minute more, Big Tom would be within easy jumping distance.

It was right then that Sammy Jay arrived. Sammy was on his way to another part of the Green Forest, and it just happened that he chose that very tree in which to rest for a few minutes. He saw the Gobblers coming and he decided to stay to watch them pass beneath him.

They are an imposing sight always and Sammy never tires of watching them. Now, Sammy had arrived silently, and Yowler was so intently watching the Gobblers that he knew nothing of Sammy's arrival in the top of the tree. Yowler's tail twitched faster as the Gobblers drew nearer. Sammy, glancing down, saw something moving. He leaned over to see better what it might be. It was Yowler's twitching tail. In a second Sammy understood what Yowler was planning to do.

"Thief! Thief! Thief!" shrieked Sammy at the top of his lungs.

Instantly all the Gobblers stopped stretching their necks and looking from side to side to see what danger Sammy was warning them of, Big Tom Gobbler saw that Sammy was looking down and he looked where Sammy was looking. He, too, saw that twitching tail and in a flash he understood what it meant.

"Quit! Quit!" said he sharply and with two or three quick steps took to his wings and sailed away over the tree-tops, all the other Gobblers following him. Yowler had almost succeeded, but not quite.

STORY 1810. November 29, 1917

Yowler Discovers a Queer Tree

Yowler, the Bob-cat, was so angry and I at the same time so disappointed, that it seemed almost as he would have a fit right there in the tree. One little minute ago he had been sure that at last he was to have a turkey dinner, and now he could see the last of the Gobbler family sailing over the tree-tops. Wasn't that enough to make anyone disappointed? And that disappointment was all caused by one person, Sammy Jay. Wasn't that enough to make anyone angry?

You see it was Sammy who had discovered Yowler crouched on a branch just above the path along which the Gobblers were coming. Sammy had understood instantly what Yowler was planning to do, and Sammy had promptly opened his mouth and shrieked a warning. Sammy always does at a time like that. It is one of the good things about Sammy Jay, which, in a measure, makes up for the bad things.

Yowler's temper is anything but good. As the last Gobbler disappeared over the treetops Yowler glared up at Sammy and screeched at him. It was a horrid screech, a screech which made everybody within hearing shiver. It actually made Sammy Jay shiver. In fact it frightened Sammy so that he wanted to get away as fast as he could, and he did just that thing. Once more Yowler screeched, and again Sammy shivered.

My!" he exclaimed. "My goodness, what a horrid temper! I wouldn't have a temper like that for anything."

Growling and spitting in his rage and disappointment, Yowler dropped down from the tree and started home to try to think of some other way in which he might catch one of those Gobblers, for he was determined that one of them he would have somehow. But though he thought and thought, it was all in vain.

For a long time, he lay on a ledge of rock Just in front of the little cave where he had made his home. He watched the Black Shadows come creeping through the Green Forest as jolly, round, red Mr. Sun went to bed behind the Purple Hills. It grew so dark that the Black Shadows seemed all one, but Yowler didn't mind. You know his eyes are made for seeing in the dark. By and by the silvery moonbeams began to creep here and there through the branches of the trees and presently looking up he saw Mistress Moon herself creeping higher and higher in the sky.

Then Yowler stretched two or three times and decided that it was time to do a little night hunting. Perhaps he might surprise Jumper the Hare. Anyway, he ought to find some Wood Mice abroad, for they love moonlight nights. Soft-footed, keeping as much as possible in the places where the Black Shadows were, he began to prowl through the Green Forest.

Yowler had no particular plan. He didn't set out for any particular place. He simply was prowling. He paid no attention to direction. So it was chance, just chance, that led him to a part of the Green Forest he never had visited at night before. He had been there during the day, but not at night. So softly that not a leaf rustled under his padded feet he stole along, stopping every few steps to listen and to look this way and that way. Presently as he glanced up, he saw a tall tree between him and Mistress Moon. He

stopped abruptly and stared hard. That was a queer looking tree, the queerest looking tree he ever had seen. On several of the branches were great black masses. They stood out sharply in the moonlight. Yowler blinked and stared again. Then, very carefully, he began to crawl toward that tree. He meant to find out for himself what those black masses were.

STORY 1811. November 30, 1917

An Interrupted Sleep

Have you ever seen a common, ordinary, everyday cat trying to creep unseen to the foot of a tree on a lower branch of which a young bird was sitting? If so, you know just about how Yowler the Bob-cat looked as he stole toward the queer-looking tree he had discovered in the Green Forest. Keeping where the Black Shadows were blackest, he crept forward with his stomach almost touching the ground. It didn't quite touch, lest it rustle the dry leaves on the ground, but it was just as near to touching without quite doing it as possible. His head was thrown back so that he could keep his eyes, his fierce gleaming yellow eyes, fixed on those dark masses in that tree showing so plainly against the light of Mistress Moon. His big padded feet were put down so carefully that not a sound did they make.

Yowler wasn't sure that those dark masses in the tree were anything in which he might be interested, but he intended to find out. Long ago he learned that it often pays to examine things which appear strange. It is the surest way of gaining knowledge. But it must be done very, very carefully. It must be done in a way which will avoid the possibility of danger. So this is why he was creeping so cautiously toward that tree.

He was quite under the tree and still he had not found out what those black masses over his head were. He crouched flat and glared up trying to make out what they were. Then one and presently another stirred uneasily. Two or three crowded together and a faint "Quit, quit," sounded as one moved along a wee bit to avoid being crowded. A glad light, the light of understanding, flared up in Yowler's fierce yellow eyes. He had stumbled on the roosting-place of the Gobbler family! Each one of those big, black masses was a Gobbler!

Yowler's mouth watered and his short stubby tail twitched with longing and eagerness, but for a few minutes he kept perfectly still waiting for the Gobblers to get over their uneasiness. At the same time, he was studying what was best to do. As soon as he was quit, sure that all the Gobblers were once more sound-asleep he crept to the foot of the tree. The nearest Gobblers were on a branch about halfway up. There were four of them huddled close together, their heads under their wings. They were quite well out on the branch, and it bent a little under their weight.

Yowler crept around to the opposite side of the tree and set his sharp claws in the bark. Carefully, so as to make no noise, he climbed until he was opposite the branch on which the four Gobblers were asleep. One of them stirred. Yowler held his breath and kept behind the trunk of the tree. When all was once more quiet, he crawled around and began to creep out on that branch. He moved an inch at a time. He was within springing

distance now, but this was no place for a jump. It would mean a fall for which he had no liking. He must creep out and seize his victim.

Inch by inch he crept out. The branch bent under his added weight. Without warning there was a sharp crack and the branch sagged sharply. In a flash the Gobblers were wide awake and in the air, while Yowler was left clinging to the broken branch in helpless rage and disappointment.

STORY 1812. December 1, 1917

Bowser the Hound Discovers Yowler

There is nothing in the world Bowser the Hound enjoys quite so much as a good hunt. He will go without his dinner any time for the pleasure of a hunt. It isn't the desire to kill, but sheer joy in using his wonderful nose in puzzling out and following the scent of the people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows, and in matching his wits against theirs, that makes Bowser slip away for a hunt whenever he can.

Now that Farmer Brown's boy no longer hunted, Bowser was forced to hunt alone whenever he could slip away. Every once in a while, he would slip away to exercise his legs and his great voice and to make sure that his wonderful nose was quite as good as ever. Certain of the Green Forest people he wisely let alone. When he scented Buster Bear's tracks he merely growled and hunted for the tracks of someone else. He was afraid of Buster Bear. When he came across the tracks of Lightfoot the Deer, he did the same thing. Farmer Brown's boy had taught him that he must not hunt Lightfoot. The tracks of Prickly Porky didn't interest him at all. He never would forget how Prickly Porky had once filled his face with the sharp little spears he carries, and how dreadfully it had hurt when they were pulled out[38].

He liked best to hunt Granny or Reddy Fox or Old Man Coyote. When he could find no traces of these, he sometimes would hunt Jumper the Hare and once in a while Peter Rabbit. The latter, however, was not very satisfactory because Peter would so soon take refuge in a bramble tangle. Bowser has one other delight, and that is to chase cats. He never chases Black Pussy because he and Black Pussy are friends, but a strange cat is a joy to Bowser.

It happened that not long after Yowler the Bob-cat had discovered the roosting place of the Gobbler family, and so nearly had that turkey dinner he had set his heart on, Bowser slipped away to the Green Forest to see what was going on there. Sniffing and sniffling among the leaves, he trotted along. He found where Lightfoot the Deer had recently passed. Bowser sniffed long. He wanted to follow that warm scent. Lightfoot would give him a splendid run. But he knew what would happen to him if Farmer Brown's boy found out that he had been hunting Lightfoot and wisely, though regretfully, turned away from temptation and trotted on.

Deeper and deeper into the Green Forest went Bowser. He had just about given up hope of a hunt, when his nose caught ever so faint a scent. Patiently and carefully he sniffed about, catching a whiff here and a whiff there, until at last he found it fresh and

38 STORY 46, 1912.

Illustrations. November 28 to December 1, 1917.

1807. Yowler Studies His Neighbors
"I want that fellow," said he, "but I can't get him in the water."

1808. Yowler Begins to Get Discouraged
He heard a distant "Gobble-obble,obble," and knew that the Gobblers were awake.

1809. Almost, But Not Quite
He saw Big Tom Gobbler and behind him all the members of the Gobbler family.

1810. Yowler Discovers a Queer Tree
That was a queer looking tree, the queerest he had ever seen.

1811. An Interrupted Sleep
In a flash the Gobblers were wide awake and in the air.

1812. Bowser the Hound Discovers Yowler
He understood—that cat had climbed up that tree.

strong.

"Cat!" exclaimed Bowser, and his great voice rolled through the Green Forest as he began to run with his nose to the ground. It was a strong scent and easy to follow. If he had stopped to think, Bowser might have realized that never before had he followed such a strong cat scent. But he was too much excited and interested to think,

On and on he raced, his great voice telling all within hearing that he was on somebody's trail and thoroughly enjoying the hunt. Suddenly the scent ended at the base of a big tree. Bowser snuffed all about, but always came back to the base of that tree. He understood. That cat had climbed up that tree. Bowser looked up and barked excitedly. A deep growl and the angriest spitting he ever had heard answered him. Then, for the first time he saw Yowler the Bob-cat. He was glaring down from a branch far out of Bowser's reach.

"Gracious!" thought Bowser. "That's the biggest cat I've ever seen!"

STORY 1813. December 3, 1917

Bowser has the Worst of a Fight

Bowser the Hound learned long ago that to wait for a cat in a tree to come down is sheer waste of time, so after barking for a few minutes at Yowler the Bob-cat he trotted off to try to find someone else to hunt. Had Farmer Brown's boy been anywhere about, Bowser would have remained right at the foot of that tree and kept barking until his master came. But he wasn't about and so Bowser went on.

But Bowser didn't forget Yowler. No, sir, Bowser didn't forget him. In fact, he thought about Yowler a great deal. Never had he seen such a big cat before. Here was someone well worth hunting. So the next opportunity Bowser got to slip away he headed straight for the place where he had first found Yowler's tracks. For a long time, he ran this way and that way sniffing and snuffling among the dead leaves without finding so much as a whiff of. Yowler's scent. He was about ready to give up when at last he found it. It was rather faint, but as he patiently followed it with his wonderful nose it grew stronger and Bowser began to run.

Straight to a great tangle of fallen trees his nose led him. The trail led straight into that tangle. Bowser tried to crawl in and as he did so a deep growl followed by an ugly snarl greeted him. Bowser backed away in a hurry. He had found Yowler sooner than he expected. The fact is Yowler had been taking a nap there and he was in bad temper, very bad temper, at being so rudely disturbed. Bowser barked excitedly and Yowler continued to growl and snarl and occasionally to spit as only a cat can.

"Leave me alone or I will scratch your eyes out!" snarled Yowler.

"Come out and try it," roared Bowser. "Just come out and try it. I'll shake you out of your skin. Just come out and try it."

And Yowler did. He came out so suddenly that he was right in front of Bowser before Bowser realized that he was coming. Yowler's ears were laid flat back, and

his lips were drawn away so as to show his long sharp teeth. It seemed as if his eyes actually shot forth sparks of fire, though of course they didn't. Bowser was so startled that he began to back away, but he didn't have a chance to take more than three or four steps. No sir, he didn't. With a snarl such as Bowser never before had heard, Yowler sprang on him.

To this day Bowser is sure that Yowler has 10 times as many claws as an ordinary cat. At that particular time, it seemed to him that Yowler had as many claws as Prickly Porky the Porcupine has little spears. It seemed to him that Yowler was all claws and sharp teeth. Bowser was not a coward, and he did his best to get Yowler's throat in his great mouth and choke him. But Yowler's fur was thick and do what he would Bowser could not get a good hold. My, my, my, such a fight as that was! Such a growling and snarling and yelping as there was! Such a snapping and clawing and biting!

But it didn't last long. Bowser knows when he has met his match, and the very first chance he got he broke away and, with his tail between his legs and yelping with pain and fright, started for home as fast as he could go. Yowler chased him a little way, then, with a last snarl of rage, turned back to finish hie nap in the tangle of fallen trees.

I guess that fellow won't bother me again in a hurry," he growled.

STORY 1814. December 4, 1917

Bowser Presents a Sorry Appearance

I'll never run away again. I never, never will.
Of hunting for a long, long time I've more than had my fill.

Bowser the Hound whimpered this over and over as he made his way home through the Green Forest. At first he ran as fast as his legs could take him, but when he was sure that Yowler the Bob-cat was no longer chasing him, he stopped to lick his wounds. When he had done this, he started on again, but he no longer ran. The truth is he felt too stiff and sore to run. He smarted and ached all over. He limped. Yowler had caught one of his feet in those sharp teeth of his and it hurt to put that foot to the ground.

And if Bowser was sore in body, he felt still worse in mind. If he had won that fight with Yowler the Bob-cat he wouldn't have minded those hurts half so much. In fact, he would have been rather proud of his wounds. But he hadn't won that fight. He had been whipped, soundly whipped by Yowler. He had turned tail and run away. More than that, he had been only too glad to get away. He had met more than his match and he knew it.

"And to think it was a cat that did it," he kept saying over and over to himself. I've been whipped by a cat and been forced to run away. How can I ever look any one in the face again? If Black Pussy should ever hear of this, I never would hear the end of it." You know Black Pussy is Farmer Brown's cat, and while she and Bowser are not exactly friends they live together in peace.

So Bowser whimpered and whined as he limped along through the Green Forest toward home. He got there just about milking time, and no one was in sight, much to his relief. A perfect picture of shame, Bowser sneaked across the dooryard and crept into his little house. No one had seen him and he hoped that no one would until he felt better.

But Bowser's hopes were all in vain. By and by, Farmer Brown's boy came from the barn with the milk and took it into the house. Then he came to the door and whistled for Bowser. Bowser didn't come. Then Farmer Brown's boy called. Bowser kept perfectly still. "Now where is that rascal gone?" exclaimed Farmer Brown's boy. "I believe he has stolen away to go hurting, and he knows that that is against the rules."

Farmer Brown's boy walked over to Bowser's little house and looked inside. Bowser thumped his tail feebly as if to apologize for not answering his master's call.

"Come out of there, sir!" commanded Farmer Brown's boy sternly.

Bowser crept out. He didn't dare not to, for he had been taught to mind. In his eyes was such a look of shame and pleading as you will see only in the eyes of a dog who knows he had done wrong. Farmer Brown's boy gave a long, low whistle of surprise as he looked at Bowser.

"Well, sir," said he, "I guess you have been punished enough for running away to hunt by yourself. Gracious, what a sight you are!"

Certainly, Bowser did present a sorry appearance. His long ears were torn. His face was scratched dreadfully. All over his body were the marks of sharp claws. In several places were ugly looking wounds where the skin had been torn. Farmer Brown's boy shook his head.

"Bowser," said he reprovingly, "you look as if you had been fighting a threshing machine. You certainly do. Now come over to the house so that I can fix you up a little."

STORY 1815. December 5, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Good Guess

With tail between his legs and head hanging in shame, Bowser the Hound crept along at the heels of Farmer Brown's boy. He crept along on three legs, the foot Yowler the Bobcat had bitten being too sore to use. As he limped along he whimpered, partly because he was so ashamed of having been so badly beaten in a fight with a cat, and partly because he knew that he had done wrong in stealing away by himself to hunt and deserved to be punished.

But his master thought that Bowser had been punished quite enough already. Gently he bathed Bowser's wounds and on the worst of them put ointment to help heal them. And as he worked Farmer Brown's boy talked to Bowser.

"You see what comes of disobedience," said he severely, and Bowser hung his

head. “You knew that you had no business to go hunting by yourself. You sneaked away to do it. Yes, sir, you sneaked away for that hunt. Now see what you’ve got—the worst torn skin you ever have had in all your life. I’m sorry, old fellow, but it serves you just right. Had you stayed at home where you belonged, this wouldn’t have happened.”

All the time Bowser watched his master’s face with such a sorrowful look in his eyes that it was impossible to scold him more. It was very clear that Bowser was both ashamed and sorry. Farmer Brown’s boy patted him gently and continued to talk to him.

“What I want to know is, who did it?” said he.

Of course Bowser couldn’t answer. All he could do was to wag his tail.

“Those scratches look to me like the work of claws and not teeth,” continued Farmer Brown’s boy. “If it were not for those I should think you had been in a fight with Old Man Coyote, though I doubt if you ever could get near enough to that rascal to make him fight. It couldn’t have been Buster Bear because you never in the world would have dared to face him. I’ve seen you put your tail between your legs at the mere smell of Buster’s tracks. You look to me as if two or three cats had tackled you together.”

Now, of course, Bowser couldn’t understand all this, but there was one word he did understand. At the word “cats” he growled way down in his throat. Farmer Brown’s boy heard it.

“So, that’s it, is it!” he exclaimed. “I don’t know of any cats around here but Black Pussy and you and Black Pussy are friends. Besides no cat the size of Black Pussy could have clawed you this way. If it was a cat, it was one a lot bigger than Black Pussy. I should say that it must have been a Wildcat. I haven’t heard of one around her for years. I wonder if one has come to the Green Forest to live. I wonder.

Farmer Brown’s boy looked over toward the Green Forest thoughtfully. Then he examined Bowser’s wounds more carefully than before. “It’s my guess that you met Yowler the Bob-cat,” said he finally. That’s my guess, Bowser. And if that is so we must do something about it. Yowler is a bad neighbor to have about. You know those Turkeys have just got nicely established in the Green Forest, but I’m afraid that if Yowler is about, there won’t be many of them left by Spring. I didn’t think we ever would do any more hunting, Bowser, but I guess we will. In a couple of days when you are feeling better, we’ll take a walk and see what we can discover.”

STORY 1816. December 6, 1917

Bowser Turns Tail

Old Mother Nature is very good to her children, and when they get hurt, she heals their wounds quickly. Within a few days after his fight with Yowler the Bobcat, when he was so badly clawed and bitten, Bowser was feeling quite himself again. So, when

one morning Farmer Brown's boy came out of the house with a gun in his hands and whistled to him, Bowser barked joyfully and jumped about his master as if he were quite crazy. You see it was a long, long time since he had seen a gun in the hands of Farmer Brown's boy. The sight of it recalled to Bowser the old days when he and his master had so often hunted over the Green Meadows and through the Green Forest. You know there is nothing Bowser so loves as a good hunt. He never had been able to understand why Farmer Brown's boy had put his gun away and given up hunting.

"Now," thought Bowser, "we shall have another glorious hunt for Reddy Fox. If I can once find his trail, I'll drive him around to where my master can shoot him," and he started to race ahead to hunt for Reddy's trail. A sharp whistle stopped him. He looked back, wagging his tail.

"You come in here at my heels, sir," commanded Farmer Brown's boy, and Bowser obeyed as he had been taught to do. He didn't understand it, but he obeyed.

Through the Old Orchard toward the Green Forest they went, Bowser sniffing and snuffing in the grass eagerly. Near the edge of the Old Orchard, he caught a whiff of scent which told him that Reddy Fox had been along there sometime during the night before. Instantly Bowser stopped and with eager little whines began to run this way and that way with his nose to the ground trying to find out which way Reddy had gone. A sharp command from Farmer Brown's boy made him come on.

Bowser stopped sniffing and snuffing and obediently followed his master. But Bowser was sorely puzzled. He knew that Farmer Brown's boy had known that he had found a trace of Reddy Fox, yet here they were going straight into the Green Forest. It was clear that Farmer Brown's boy was not going to hunt Reddy Fox. Bowser was disappointed, but the sight of the terrible gun on the shoulder of Farmer Brown's boy relieved him a little. They must be going to hunt someone or that gun would have been left at home, so he would try to be patient until he should find out who that someone was.

Deeper and deeper into the Green Forest his master led the way. Presently Bowser began to grow uneasy. The farther they went the more uneasy he grew. You see, they were getting nearer and nearer the place where a few days before Bowser had been so scratched and bitten by Yowler the Bob-cat. He had no desire to meet Yowler again. A dreadful thought popped into his head. Could it be that it was Yowler himself Farmer Brown's boy meant to hunt?

Presently Farmer Brown's boy ordered Bowser ahead. "Go find him, Bowser! Sic him!" he commanded.

In the joy of being ordered to hunt, Bowser bounded ahead. He didn't know whose trail he was to look for, but he was to hunt for someone. Perhaps he would find the trail of old Granny Fox or the trail of Jumper the Hare. He began to run this way and that way, sniffing eagerly among the leaves. He had quite forgotten Yowler the Bobcat.

So they went on for some little distance, Bowser eagerly hunting for the trail of someone, anyone, who would leave a scent he could follow with his wonderful nose. And then suddenly he came on a trail, a fresh trail, the strong scent from which filled

his nose. But instead of opening his mouth and sending his great voice rolling through the Green Forest, as he usually does, Bowser stopped. The hair on his neck stood up in a stiff little ridge. He growled softly; then he deliberately turned, and with his tail between his legs sneaked back to his master and crept behind him.

STORY 1817. December 7, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Finds Yowler

All hail to him who in defeat
Resolves he'll ne'er again retreat.

That is the spirit that triumphs. That the spirit of the truly brave. It is those who, beaten in one battle, return again and again to the fight, whom we most respect. Bowser the Hound isn't this kind. When Yowler the Bobcat won that fight in the Green Forest, he won for all time from Bowser. Bowser's heart was not stout enough to make him willing to face Yowler again. So when, eagerly sniffing this way and that ahead of Farmer Brown's boy, he came across the fresh trail of Yowler, the scent that filled his wonderful nose filled him with anger, but still more with fear.

When Farmer Brown's boy saw Bowser come sneaking back, his tail between his legs and his head hanging, he knew right away that Bowser had found traces of someone whom he feared. He had seen Bowser act that way before when he had he had come across the fresh scent of Buster Bear. Had he smelled Buster Bear this time or had he smelled Yowler the Bobcat? Farmer Brown's boy wished he knew.

"Bowser," said he severely, "Bowser, I'm ashamed of you. I certainly am ashamed of you. I know well enough that you haven't found anybody yet. All you've found is the scent left by the feet of someone who has been along this way, and here you are turning tail and sneaking back. I'm afraid you are a coward, sir."

Bowser crawled along the ground to his master's feet and feebly wagged his tail. Farmer Brown's boy went on toward the place from which Bowser had just come. Bowser sneaked along behind him. What he wanted to do was to turn and run home, but he didn't dare do that. He knew that he would be soundly punished if he did. Farmer Brown's boy watched sharply for tracks, but there were none to be seen. Then he tried to send Bowser on, but Bowser wouldn't go. For the first time in his life, he absolutely refused to obey Farmer Brown's boy. He wouldn't hunt.

Farmer Brown's boy sat down on a log to consider.

"Bowser," said he, "how do you expect I am going to find that Bobcat if you won't help? It's silly of you, very silly, indeed, to be afraid when I am along with my gun. I know well enough you've found his tracks around here and I want to know which way he has gone. If I had a nose like yours, I might find out, but I haven't and now you won't lend me yours. There's a ledge of rocks back here and that is the only place I can think of where he may make a home. We'll go over and see what we shall see. And, mind you, don't try to sneak away and run home!"

Now, this is just what Bowser wanted to do. It is just what he would have done if Farmer Brown's boy hadn't kept sharp watch of him. But as they went on and Bowser found no more of the scent of Yowler, he began to feel better. It wasn't in this direction that he had had that dreadful fight with Yowler. He almost forgot Yowler and began to run this way and run that way with his nose to the ground hoping to find the trail of Jumper the Hare.

So they came to the ledge of rock and right at the foot of it Bowser suddenly stopped short, growled as he looked up for a minute, then turned with a little whimper and ran back past his master, who called to him sharply. Bowser stopped, but Farmer Brown's boy couldn't get him a step nearer that ledge. Farmer Brown's boy chuckled.

"You've told me all I need to know, Bowser," said he. "From the way you act it is clear that Yowler is somewhere in this ledge."

With gun ready he climbed up and began to look for a cave. At a small opening among the rocks he stopped. Just in front were a few little bones. Farmer Brown's boy stooped and tried to see inside the hole. A low growl, an ugly growl ending in a snarl, caused him to step back hurriedly, his gun ready to use. He had found Yowler at home.

STORY 1818. December 8, 1917

Farmer Brown's Boy Tries to Smoke Out Yowler

If there is anyone with an uglier sounding snarl or a more threatening growl that Yowler the Bobcat I don't know who it is. Neither does Farmer Brown's boy. When he heard it for the first time issuing from the little cave in the ledge of rocks deep in the Green Forest where Yowler had made his home he backed off in a hurry, and funny little creepy, chilly feelings ran all over him. He began to have a feeling of sympathy for Bowser the Hound. He didn't wonder that Bowser refused to hunt anyone who could snarl and growl like that, especially after having felt the teeth and claws with which Yowler was armed.

Now that he had found Yowler, he wondered what he should do next. There was no way he could get at Yowler in that little cave. He couldn't crawl in there if he wanted to, and he didn't want to. No, siree, that was the last thing he wanted to do. He couldn't get at Yowler, but Yowler could get at him anytime he chose to rush out, unless he was careful not to get too near. Farmer Brown's boy went off a little way to sit down and think it over. Bowser sat down at a safe distance and watched. He wondered if things would happen as they had happened with him when he found Yowler in the heap of fallen trees. If they did, perhaps his master would understand just how he felt and why he had no desire to hunt Yowler any more.

After a while, Farmer Brown's boy gathered some stones and sticks and threw them in the little cave. At least he threw them in at the entrance. But the only result was renewed snarling and growling. You see those stones and sticks couldn't reach Yowler because there were several turns in the passage to the little cave where he was, but they made him angry. Finding that he couldn't make Yowler come out in this way, Farmer

Illustrations. December 3 to December 8, 1917.

1813. Bowser has the Worst of a Fight
"Leave me alone or I will scratch your eyes out," snarled Yowler.

1814. Bowser Presents a Sorry Appearance
"Now, where has that rascal gone?" exclaimed Farmer Brown's Boy.

1815. Farmer Brown's Boy Makes a Good Guess
(This story ran without an illustration in most newspapers. The *Ottawa Journal* used the above illustration with no caption.)

1816. Bowser Turns Tail
"Go find him, Bowser! Sic him!" he commanded.

1817. Farmer Brown's Boy Finds Yowler
"Bowser," said he. "How am I going to find Bob-Cat if you won't help?"

1818. Farmer Brown's Boy Tries to Smoke Out Yowler
Farmer Brown's Boy pushed the smoking pile of leaves in at the hole.

Brown's boy decided that he would try smoking him out. He no longer feared that Yowler might rush out and attack him. He knew that Yowler was a coward and would fight only when he had to. He knew, too, that Yowler was smart enough to know that so long as he remained in his cave, he was quite safe.

So Farmer Brown's boy laid aside his gun and gathered a lot of dry leaves. Then he found a lot of damp ones and these he piled on the dry ones. When he had a big enough pile to suit him, he pushed the whole against the entrance to the cave where Yowler was and then set fire to the dry leaves underneath. They blazed up merrily, but the damp leaves on top were too damp to blaze and they smoldered and made a great deal of smoke. With a long stick, Farmer Brown's boy pushed the smoking pile of leaves in at the hole. Then he went back to a safe distance and waited. He knew that that smoke would work back into the cave and that Yowler would not be able to stand it long.

The snarling and spitting and growling increased, and now and then there was a cough which showed that Yowler was becoming very uncomfortable in the cave. With his gun ready Farmer Brown's boy waited, but he waited in vain. He gathered more leaves and pushed them in, but still Yowler refused to come out. From little cracks among the rocks Farmer Brown's boy could see the smoke working up so he knew that it must be filling the cave. It was queer that Yowler should or could stand it so long.

Suddenly Sammy Jay began to scream at the top of his lungs some distance off to the right. Farmer Brown's boy looked over there just in time to see a big brown form bound away among the trees. Farmer Brown's boy's face fell. "How stupid of me!" he exclaimed. "How very stupid! There was another entrance to that cave. I ought to have thought of that and looked for it. Yowler has got away this time, but he won't again."

STORY 1819. December 10, 1917

Green Forest People Breathe Freely Again

News travels very fast in the Green Forest and on the Green Meadows. Yowler the Bobcat had been living in the Green Forest only a few days before everybody knew that he was there, and a great fear filled the Green Forest. Peter Rabbit no longer went there at all. Not since the night when he had seen Yowler over by the pond of Paddy the Beaver had Peter ventured into the Green Forest.

Big Tom Gobbler and his family and Mr. and Mrs. Grouse and their family didn't know a minute of peace and security during the day, and slept poorly at night. They actually were growing thin when they should have been growing fat, all on account of fear and worry because of Yowler the Bobcat. Paddy the Beaver left uncut certain trees he had planned to cut. They were farther from the water than he cared to go with Yowler about. Aways timid, Jumper the Hare was just a bundle of nerves and was seriously thinking of going back to the Great Woods where he had been born. Happy Jack the Gray Squirrel and Chatterer the Red Squirrel kept to the edge of the Green Forest, the edge nearest Farmer Brown's. Unc' Billy Possum and Ol' Mrs. Possum retired to their hollow tree for the Winter earlier than they would have. Whitefoot the Wood Mouse hardly dared put his nose outside his home.

It is dreadful to live in a state of constant fear. There is nothing in life much worse. All joy was gone from the Green Forest, at least for the smaller people. Lightfoot the Deer and Buster Bear didn't mind because they were too big to fear Yowler. Prickly Porky the Porcupine didn't fear him in the least and went about his business as usual. Billy Mink pretended not to care, but it was noticed that he kept close to the Laughing Brook. Jimmy Skunk wandered about in his usual independent manner. He knew that Yowler would be very hungry, indeed before he would bother him. But all the other little people shivered with fear whenever they heard a leaf rustle.

Then one day Sammy Jay flew through the Green Forest spreading the news of what he had seen at the ledge of rocks deep in the Green Forest. He told how he had seen Farmer Brown's boy there with a terrible gun and how he had made a great smoke which had driven Yowler the Bobcat out of the cave where he had made his home. Of course, everybody was tremendously interested. It made some a little uneasy to learn that Farmer Brown's boy had brought out his terrible gun again, for it was long since he had used it. But Sammy Jay, who is sharp and shrewd, was sure that it was intended for use only against Yowler the Bobcat.

Sammy was right. Several times Farmer Brown's boy visited Yowler's home, but never again was he greeted with snarls and growls. At last, he became convinced that Yowler no longer used that little cave for a home. Then he hunted everywhere through the Green Forest without finding a sign of Yowler.

"I believe that smoking drove him out of the Green Forest altogether," he decided at last. "If it did, I'm glad. I didn't want to shoot him. I would have left him in peace but for the fact that he was too dangerous a neighbor for my friends in feathers and fur to have around. I hope he has gone for good."

He had. Yowler fears man more than anything else, and when he escaped from that cave he headed straight back for the Great Mountain from which he came. He hated to leave such good hunting grounds, but he just couldn't stand being hunted himself. So back he went to his old home, where man seldom came.

It didn't take the little people of the Green Forest much longer to learn that Yowler no longer was hunting in the Green Forest than it had taken them to learn of his arrival there. At once they began to breathe freely again and happiness once more reigned in the Green Forest. And it was all because of Farmer Brown's boy.

STORY 1820. December 11, 1917

Buster Bear's Nose is Bumped

Buster Bear was finding it hard work to get enough to eat, and he knew that it was about time for him to make his bed and go to sleep for the rest of the Winter. He hated to go, did Buster Bear. He wanted to prowl about in the Green Forest as long as possible, and so he kept putting off going to bed for the Winter. It would be time enough when the ground froze hard and the snow made bad going. So he roamed about hunting for the last of the sweet acorns, digging up such roots as he could find that he

liked, and so managing to get enough to eat, such as it was.

Early one morning as he wandered about rather aimlessly, he came out by Farmer Brown's sugar camp. Whenever he happens to be near there, he cannot resist the temptation to prowl around the little sugar house, for always there hangs about it the tantalizing smell of sweets. You know nobody in the world has a sweeter tooth than Buster Bear. It always made his mouth water to sniff at the cracks in that sugar house. It was tantalizing and it did him no good, for he couldn't get inside. Even if he could have got inside, he would have been no better off, for Farmer Brown had taken away all the sugar and syrup long ago.

But somehow Buster always got a certain amount of pleasure in sniffing about that sugar-house and thinking of the goodies that had been there and half hoping that by some chance he might yet find some which had been over- looked. So this morning he prowled about the sugar-house as usual and whined hungrily as he sniffed and sniffed. It was very foolish of Buster, because always he went away in bad temper because of failure and disappointment.

Now just back of the sugar house a big stone had been hung by a rope to a branch of a tree. It had been there a long time. Just why it was hung there probably Farmer Brown's boy himself had forgotten. But there it hung. Buster Bear had often seen it. In fact, he had seen it every time he had visited there. He had sniffed at it the first time he had visited the sugar house and had discovered that it was nothing but a stone. After that he had paid no attention to it.

This morning just out of idle curiosity, he sat up and with one big paw reached out and touched it gently. Of course it moved a little. This was curious. Buster reached out and touched it again. It swung a little away from him and then back. Buster backed off a few steps and looked at it suspiciously. He didn't know just what to make of it. He walked around it and looked at it from all sides. Then he sat up and hit it rather sharply with his paw. It swung away, but it came back again so quickly that it caught Buster by surprise and hit him sharply on his nose. Yes, sir, that stone struck Buster right on the nose.

Now Buster's nose is, like most noses, rather sensitive. That blow on the nose hurt, for that big stone was hard and it had swung back rather quickly. Buster's temper flared up in a flash and he struck that stone harder than before. Away it swung and Buster sat there, watching it with eyes that snapped with anger. Then back came that big stone harder than before and before Buster could dodge it struck him fairly on the nose again. It was so sudden and unexpected that he almost lost his balance. He did lose his temper. He lost it completely.

STORY 1821. December 12, 1917

Sammy Jay Nearly Splits His Side

It's mean to laugh at others;
You know that this is true,

But when things are so funny
What can a fellow do?

Sammy Jay is always ready to laugh at his neighbors. He goes about looking for a chance to laugh at them. He even plays tricks on them just to make a chance for a laugh at the expense of one of them. If he sees one of them doing something likely to get him into trouble, Sammy hangs around so that he may have a chance to laugh when the trouble comes. It is only when the trouble is likely to prove to be real danger that Sammy doesn't laugh. Instead he promptly gives warning. Many of the little people of the Green Forest owe their lives to Sammy Jay because of timely warnings he has given them: That is one reason why in spite of his mischievous ways almost every one of his neighbors would be sorry to have anything serious happen to Sammy Jay. Sammy Jay happened to be flying near Farmer Brown's sugar house when he caught sight of Buster Bear prowling about aimlessly. Sammy stopped to watch him. He dearly loves to watch Buster because Buster is a funny fellow and is always doing queer things. So it was that Sammy was watching when Buster got his nose bumped by the big stone which hung by a rope from a tree just back of the sugar house. He saw exactly what happened. Buster reached out and touched the stone with a big paw. The stone swung away and the came back and tapped Buster on the nose. Buster was provoked and hit the stone sharply. Away it swung and then back harder than before, giving Buster a hard bump on the nose again. Sammy understood perfectly what was happening. He saw that Buster's temper had made him quite blind to the real facts. He saw that Buster seemed to think that that stone was doing this purposely. Sammy wanted to shriek with laughter, but he didn't just then for fear he might spoil the best joke of the season. He kept still and watched.

Now if the first tap on the nose made Buster angry, the second and harder bump filled him with rage, blind rage. His little eyes blazed. He growled his deepest, most grumbly-rumbly growl and quick as a flash he struck that stone a mighty blow with his paw.

"I guess that will teach you a lesson," he growled as the stone flew off. Hardly were the words out of his mouth when back came the stone and hit him such a crack on the side of the head that he lost his balance and tumbled over. Then Sammy Jay could restrain himself no longer. He shrieked with laughter. It was the funniest thing he ever had seen. He laughed until he nearly split his sides. At least that is the way he felt. His cousin, Blacky the Crow, heard him and came hurrying over to see what was up. Chatterer the Red Squirrel heard him and came racing through the tree tops,

Peter Rabbit happened to be not far away and he hurried over. You know Peter never misses anything if he can help it. Drummer the Woodpecker and Tommy Tit the Chickadee also came to see what was going on. Mrs. Grouse stole softly to a place where she could also see. In fact, everybody within hearing of Sammy's voice hurried over there, for they knew by the sound that Sammy had discovered something worth seeing. So in almost no time at all many pairs of bright eyes were watching Buster Bear, and he was in such a rage that he didn't know it.

STORY 1822. December 13, 1917

How Buster Bear Fought Himself

O, you who read this tale, beware,
And ne'er be fooled like Buster Bear.

You see, Buster Bear was engaged in a terrible fight with himself. The joke was he didn't know it. All the little people who were looking on—Sammy Jay, Drummer the Woodpecker, Tommy Tit the Chickadee, Blacky the Crow, Mrs. Grouse, Peter Rabbit, Chatterer the Red Squirrel—knew it and were fairly hugging themselves with delight. There was Buster Bear, great big Buster Bear, in a terrible rage and growing angrier every second fighting himself without knowing it, and getting the worst of it at that.

You see how it was, don't you? Buster had hit that big stone hanging by a rope from a tree, and of course the stone had swung back and hit him. This had made him lose his temper and hit it still harder, with the result that it swung back harder than before. Then he had hit it very hard indeed, and it had promptly returned and knocked him over. Of course, the harder he hit it the harder it came back. He was simply fighting himself and was too angry to see it.

When Buster scrambled to his feet after the stone had upset him, he was in such a rage that he fairly squalled. That's what he did—squalled. In a flash he was up on his hind legs and he hit that stone with all his might, and you know he is so big and strong that he can strike a tremendous blow. This time he hit so hard that the stone, big as it was, flew away the full length of the rope, and up and over the branch from which it hung. Buster saw it disappear and gave a little grunt of satisfaction. He was sure that this was the end of the provoking thing.

But hardly was that little grunt out when he gave another grunt and this wasn't one of satisfaction. It was one of surprise and anger and pain. For just a little second Buster Bear saw stars. You see, that stone had gone up and over the branch and then, of course, it had swung down. Buster was looking in the direction it had disappeared. and so when it swung down it took him squarely in the back of the head. It knocked him sprawling.

He was up again in a flash and whirled around to see who this new enemy might be. Of course, no one was to be seen, but there swung that thing he had just knocked out of sight! It was hard to believe. Buster couldn't believe it at first. He rubbed his eyes. Then he reached out and touched the thing gently. It swung off and then back just as before in the most provoking way. He had to believe then.

Once more Buster flew into a terrible rage. He danced about in anger. He was just about the maddest bear that ever was. So just as before he cuffed and struck the swinging stone, and just as before he got the worst, very much the worst of it. It whacked him on the nose. It cracked him on the back of his head. It thumped him on the right ear. It crashed against his left ear. And the harder he hit it the harder it hit back. It was the most provoking enemy Buster ever had encountered. He himself growled and grunted and whined and roared, but it made no sound. Buster didn't understand it at all.

At last he happened to catch it in both paws and hooked his big claws around it.

He tried to bite it, but, of course, his teeth made no impression on it. He threw all his weight on it. There was a snap and Buster fell headlong. But he still held this provoking enemy fast in his claws. He scrambled to his feet and looked down. All he saw was a big stone with a piece of rope around it. He cuffed it. It simply rolled along the ground. Buster looked back. His enemy had disappeared. There was nothing to be seen but a piece of broken rope hanging from a branch. Once more he cuffed the stone, but it didn't hit back.

Buster turned and marched off into the Green Forest with the air of a victor, there to nurse his aching head. And the little people of the Green Forest who had been looking on went their several ways to spread the joke of how Buster Bear had fought

STORY 1823. December 14, 1917

Buster Bear Retires

It was shortly after his foolish fight with the swinging stone and himself, about which all the little people of the Green Forest laugh to this day, that Buster Bear decided that it was high time that he made ready for the Winter. In one way he had been making ready for the Winter ever since early in the Fail. This was by stuffing himself and growing fat. He knew that he couldn't be too fat.

Sammy Jay, watching Buster stuff himself one day, had exclaimed: "Buster Bear, you are the greediest, most piggish person I know!"

Buster had looked up with a twinkle in his little eyes, for Buster's eyes really are little for the size of him. "You are mistaken. Sammy," said he. "You are quite mistaken. I may seem greedy and piggish, but I'm not. In the next few weeks, I've got to eat for all Winter."

"You've got to what?" exclaimed Sammy.

"I've got to eat for all Winter," replied Buster. "If I don't stuff myself now by the middle of Winter I'll be starving and no food to be found. But if I get a good thick layer of fat between my skin and my ribs this Fall it will last me until Spring. I'm eating now so as to sleep by and by. I tell you what it is, Sammy Jay, there's no fun in waking up in the middle of the Winter with an empty stomach and not a blessed thing to put in it. I know, because it happened to me once and I don't intend to have it happen again."

So Buster continued to stuff himself as long as there was plenty to eat. But, as Winter drew near, food became scarce and Buster had to do a lot of walking to find enough for a good square meal. Finally, he realized that he was walking off the fat he had tried to hard to put on.

"This will never do. This will never do at all," he grumbled. "It is time, high time, to make my bed and get ready for Winter."

Buster believes in doing things promptly. Having made up his mind that the time had come to make ready for the Winter he shuffled along through the Green Forest until he came to the ledge of rocks where he had made his home the Winter before. In a sort

of cave made by an overhanging shelf of rock he scraped together a pile of dry leaves and spread this out to make a bed. When he had enough to suit him, he lay down on it to try it. Buster is a bit fussy about his bed. It was very comfortable. He felt drowsy. In two minutes, he was asleep.

From that time on Buster, spent most of his time sleeping. On warm day, he would prowl about a little, hunting for food, but he didn't go far. Somehow he wasn't very hungry. At last one morning he awoke to find a world of white.

Buster got up and poked his head out. The ground was covered with snow and the air was full of it, for the storm was not over. For a few minutes Buster blinked rather stupidly at the dancing flakes. Then he shook himself, yawned and turned back to his warm, comfortable bed. "I won't go out today," thought he, as he closed his eyes.

He didn't. Though he didn't suspect it at the time, Buster Bear had retired for the Winter. His sleep became deeper and deeper. It changed from ordinary sleep to that wonderful sleep which is I called hibernation. Buster wouldn't open his eyes again until the coming of Mistress Spring.

STORY 1824. December 15, 1917

Jumper the Hare Becomes Anxious

My worries do not worry you:
  Your worries do not bother me.
And so it goes the whole world o'er—
  No one from worry wholly free.

And some have such silly worries. At least they seem silly to others. They go about worrying over things that perhaps you and I would think not worth a passing thought. Just there is where a certain amount of unfairness lies. The worries of another seem to us foolish, but often that is because we do not know or cannot understand just how things are.

Just take the case of Jumper the Hare. Jumper was worrying. He was worrying a great deal. He was very, very anxious. What about? About his coat. Yes, sir, Jumper was worrying about his Winter coat. It wasn't that his present coat wasn't warm enough. It was that. His coat was thick and warm and comfortable, but it wasn't the right color. Now, doesn't it seem silly to allow the color of one's coat to be a cause of worry? Of course it does. And, yet, it may not be. One of the truest sayings in the world is that circumstances alter cases. Jumper had a brown coat and he wanted a white one. But that desire wasn't from vanity. No, sir, in Jumper's case the desire for a white coat wasn't from vanity at all. Jumper wanted a white coat for safety.

So, worrying over the color of his coat wasn't silly after all, was it?

He explained it all to Peter Rabbit one day when Peter had called him foolish for caring what color his coat was.

"Anyone who wastes time thinking about how he looks is vain and foolish,"

declared Peter. “My coat isn’t pretty but as long as it is thick and warm I don’t care. A white coat would be much finer looking, but I haven’t got it and am not likely to get it and I don’t lose any sleep worrying about it. There isn’t any more reason why you should.”

“That is where you are quite wrong, Cousin Peter,” replied Jumper. “It isn’t that I care a twitch of my whiskers about the fact that a white coat is much better looking than the brown one I now have. I don’t. Of course, it is nice to have a good-looking coat, but if that was all there was to it, I wouldn’t give the matter another thought. You spend most of your time in the dear Old Brier Patch or within jumping distance of a bramble-tangle where you are safe from most of your enemies. I live here in the Green Forest, and my safety depends on two things-not being seen by my enemies and on my long legs when I am seen by them.

“In Summer, my brown coat is just right. In Winter when there is no snow on the ground it is just right. If there never was any snow I wouldn’t give my coat a second thought. But the ground is going to be white with snow most of the Winter. It always is. And, against such whiteness, a brown coat shows up dreadfully. I need a white coat to match the snow. With that I would have less to worry about. But here it is the beginning of Winter and my coat is still brown. I think it is beginning to turn, but supposing it doesn’t turn. Or supposing we have a lot of snow before it turns. That is what is worrying me. Does it look to you. Cousin Peter, as if my coat is beginning to turn?”

Peter looked Jumper over carefully “I believe it is,” he replied. “I see a great many white hairs scattered through it.”

Jumper sighed.

“I hope you are right,” said he. “It seems to me that it is very late in changing this year, though perhaps it isn’t any later than usual. I hope there will not be much snow until I am all white. I am always terribly, anxious at this time of year. If there is a lot of snow before my coat changes, I am in a bad fix, because I show up so against the snow. And if my coat turns before there is any snow I am quite as badly off, because its whiteness shows up against the brown of the dead leaves. You ought to be thankful, Peter, that you don’t have to worry about your coat.”

“I am,” replied Peter[39].

STORY 1825. December 17, 1917

Jumper’s Mind is Relieved

To Jumper the Hare, the color of his coat is a most important matter. It really is. So while wasting much thought on one’s clothes usually is both wrong and foolish, in Jumper’s case there is some excuse. You see, it is this way. Jumper cannot fight to protect himself from his enemies: he has nothing to fight with. So in order to live, Jumper the Hare must do one of two things; he must keep out of sight of his enemies or

39 Compare to STORY 287, 1913, where Burgess depicts Peter Rabbit as having a white coat during the winter.

Illustrations. December 10 to December 15, 1917.

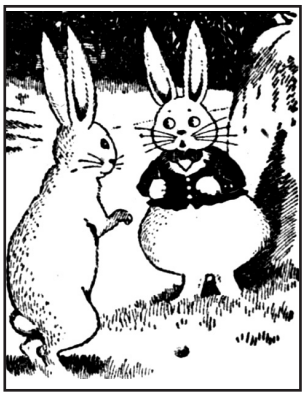
1819. Green Forest People Breathe Freely Again
Unc' Billy Possum an' Ol' Mrs. Possum retired to their hollow tree for the winter earlier than they would have.

1820. Buster Bear's Nose is Bumped
It always made his mouth water to sniff at the crack in that sugar house.

1821. Sammy Jay Nearly Splits His Side
Away it swung and then back harder than before, giving Buster a hard bump on the nose again.

1822. How Buster Bear Fought Himself
When it swung down, it took him squarely in the back of the head.

1823. Buster Bear Retires
The ground was covered with snow and the air was full of it.



1824. Jumper the Hare Becomes Anxious
"Anyone who wastes time thinking about how he looks is vain and foolish," declared Peter.

he must trust to his hind legs to take him out of reach.

Now Jumper the Hare is of very good size. He is big enough to be seen at some distance, especially by such keen eyes as those of Reddy Fox and Old Man Coyote and Hooty the Owl and several others I might mention. Because of this and his inability to fight, Old Mother Nature has taken pity on him and has helped him by furnishing him with a coat which helps him to remain unseen most of the time. In Summer it is a mixture of brown and gray that so closely matches the color of the ground and the dry brown leaves that when Jumper sits perfectly still, the keenest of eyes often fail to see him. In Winter that coat is as white as the driven snow and if you chanced to see Jumper sitting motionless you would surely take him for a little mound of snow,

But there is a between-times when Jumper is badly worried. You see, if his coat should turn all white before there is any snow he would be very badly off, very badly off indeed. The dullest eyes would see him then. On the other hand, if the snow should fall and turn all the Green Forest white before his coat had turned at all, he would be just as badly off. So this is why Jumper so anxiously asked his cousin, Peter Rabbit, if the latter could see any white hairs, and felt a little better when Peter said that he could.

It was about 10 days after this that Peter met Jumper again. Jumper was in fine spirits. He showed it by the way he jumped and kicked up his heels. Peter stared at him a minute or so, then abruptly demanded: "What's the matter with you, Cousin Jumper? What's making you so happy and frisky?"

"Relief," replied Jumper promptly. "A great load is off my mind."

"It seems to be off your heels, too," retorted Peter as Jumper kicked his heels in the air in the funniest way you can imagine. "You act to me a little bit crazy. What was this load of which you have been relieved?"

"Do you remember when we last met how worried I was?" asked Jumper.

Peter nodded. "I'd forgotten all about that," he confessed. "You were worrying about the color of your coat. I see it has changed a great deal since then. It is neither brown nor white, but a whole lot of both."

Jumper nodded his head vigorously. "That's it, Peter," said he. "That's what has relieved my mind and made me so light in the heels." Jumper once more kicked the latter high in the air. "Now," he continued, "when there isn't any snow on the ground, I am still brown enough not to be noticed, and when there is snow on the ground I am white enough not to be seen. By the time enough snow falls to remain all Winter and keep the ground white I shall be all white myself. So a great load is off my mind, and that is why I feel so frisky."

"I'd feel frisky myself if I were in your place," replied Peter, a wee bit wistfully.

STORY 1826. December 18, 1917

A Test of Two Coats

Peter Rabbit was a little bit wistful. The truth is he was just a wee bit envious. Peter isn't much given to envy and when he is envious it never is for very long. He is too wise for that. But once in a while envy will creep in for just a brief space. It was so now. His cousin, Jumper the Hare, had had so much to say about the advantages of his coat, which is brown at all seasons save when the earth is white with snow, and then is white, too, that Peter actually began to think that Jumper was much better off than he. Then something happened that made him sure of it.

He and Jumper had been so busy talking that they had forgotten to keep their usual sharp watch for danger and so Reddy Fox was within a few jumps of them before they discovered him. Probably he wouldn't have seen them but for the fact that Jumper the Hare had been kicking up his heels for joy. Peter was the first to spy Reddy.

"Run, Jumper! Run!" he cried and set a good example by darting off as fast as ever he could. Jumper didn't wait to see what had frightened Peter. He had long ago learned that there is just one thing to do when a warning of danger is given and that one thing is to heed the warning first and look into the matter later. So with Peter's first leap, Jumper leaped too. Then as he ran, he rolled his eyes back and saw the red coat of Reddy Fox behind him and understood.

"Now, Peter, I'll show you how my coat works," said he as he bounded along beside Peter. "Of course, Reddy would much rather catch me than you because I am so much bigger and would make so much more of a dinner. Head straight for that tangle of briers over yonder, but just on the edge of it stop and sit perfectly still right where the ground is partly white with snow. I will do the same thing, but a little to one side of you. That little patch of brush ahead of us is going to shut us out of Reddy's sight for just a few seconds, and that will give us a chance to separate. You stop close enough to the bramble-tangle to creep inside to safety if Reddy discovers you. Now remember that I am much bigger than you and so Reddy would much prefer to catch me, and if he sees me certainly will try his best to get me for his dinner."

They darted behind the little patch of brush and then separated. Peter raced across the very edge of the bramble- tangle and there squatted where the ground was white with snow. A little to one side of him Jumper the Hare did the same thing right, close to a little bush from which hung a few dead brown leaves. Hardly had they had time to catch their breath when out from the little patch of brush sprang Reddy Fox and stopped abruptly. What had become of those two bounding forms he had seen disappear behind that little patch of brush. Hastily but sharply, he looked this way and looked that way. He looked straight at Jumper the Hare but didn't see him. That is, he didn't know that he saw Jumper.

You see, Jumper didn't move so much as a whisker, and his coat made him look so much like his surroundings that Reddy looked right at him without seeing him. Then his eyes turned in the direction of Peter. The instant they rested on Peter, Reddy grinned. Peter's brown coat showed up so against the white of the show that Reddy couldn't very well help seeing him.

At once Reddy began to creep toward Peter. Jumper the Hare thumped loudly with his hind feet. Peter understood the signal and crept into the heart of the bramble tangle

to safety, while Jumper stretched his long legs and disappeared in great bounds.

It was this test of the two coats that made Peter a wee bit envious. Do you wonder?

STORY 1827. December 19, 1917

Peter Rabbit Broods

Do you know what it means to brood? It means to keep thinking and thinking about something that it was better not to think about. Now Peter Rabbit is such a happy-go-lucky small person that he is the very last one in all the Great World you would expect to brood over anything. But you know how often in this life it is the unexpected that happens. It was so in the case of Peter Rabbit. Peter had taken to brooding and because of it he was unhappy himself and he was making little Mrs. Peter unhappy.

Can you guess what it was all about? I'll tell you. It was about his coat. Yes sir, it was about his coat. And it was all because of that little test you know about when Peter and Jumper the Hare were surprised by Reddy Fox and Reddy quite overlooked Jumper because the latter's coat so nearly matched his surroundings. Reddy had had no trouble in seeing Peter, because Peter's brown coat showed strongly against the white of the snow-covered ground. Peter had had no difficulty in getting away from Reddy. He had simply crept into the heart of a bramble-tangle where Reddy could not follow, and there he had remained until he was sure that the way to the dear Old Brier-patch was clear and safe.

Once back in the dear Old Brier Patch, with nothing in particular to do, Peter began to think about the splendid coat of his big cousin, Jumper the Hare, and how it changed from brown in Summer to pure white in Winter, when most of the time the ground is covered with snow. With his own eyes he had seen how Jumper had only to sit perfectly still in order to be overlooked, even by such a sharp-eyed fellow as Reddy Fox. Even before then Peter had been a little, just a wee bit, envious. Now as he thought the matter over, his envy grew and grew and grew.

He couldn't put the matter out of his mind at all. He was cross to Mrs. Peter. He had no appetite. All he did was to sit and brood and brood.

"For goodness sake, Peter Rabbit, whatever is the matter with you?" demanded little Mrs. Peter when she could stand it no longer.

"Nothing," mumbled Peter.

"Don't tell that to me!" snapped little Mrs. Peter. "Something is the matter. Have you got a stomach-ache?" You see Peter's troubles usually are in his stomach.

Peter shook his head. "It's nothing the matter with my feelings," said he. "It's my coat."

"Your coat!" exclaimed little Mrs. Peter looking at Peter as if she thought him crazy. "For the love of little bunnies, what's the matter with your coat? It looks all right

to me." She inspected Peter carefully.

Peter shifted his position uncomfortably. "It isn't just my coat exactly," he explained. "It's the unfairness of Old Mother Nature. Why should she give my cousin, Jumper the Hare, a white coat in Winter to make it easy for him to remain unseen by his enemies and give poor little me a brown coat so that I can't help being seen? I tell you it's unfair. It's dreadfully unfair."

STORY 1828. December 20, 1917

Jimmy Skunk Shames Peter Rabbit

The more Peter Rabbit brooded over his lack of a white coat in Winter like that of his cousin, Jumper the Hare, the more convinced he became that Old Mother Nature was not fair. Little Mrs. Peter was shocked, yes, sir, she was shocked, when Peter called Old Mother Nature unfair, for little Mrs. Peter, like all the other Quaddies, believed that Old Mother Nature gives to each that which is best for them. So little Mrs. Peter was quite upset and begged Peter not to say such a thing when others were about. Peter just grumbled and wouldn't make any promises.

So Peter made things very uncomfortable in the dear Old Brier Patch, where usually there is such an air of comfort and happiness. He quite disgusted little Mrs. Peter as he brooded and brooded over something which all the brooding in the world wouldn't change one particle. Wasn't it silly of him?

One morning Jimmy Skunk happened along. Of course, he saw right away that something was wrong with Peter. His eyes twinkled. "Good morning, Peter," said he. "You seem to have something weighing mighty heavy on your mind. Anything the matter with Mrs. Peter?"

"No," replied Peter.

"Anything the matter with any of the children[40]?" asked Jimmy.

"No," replied Peter.

"Anything the matter with yourself?" asked Jimmy.

"No—o," replied Peter, hesitating a little.

"My, my, my, this is serious!" exclaimed Jimmy. "Nothing the matter with Mrs. Peter, nothing the matter with any of the children, nothing the matter with himself, and yet here is my old friend Peter Rabbit looking as if the world were upside down and he had quite fallen out of his place in it. My, my, my, I think I shall have to go consult Old Mother Nature and see if she can find out what the trouble is."

At the mention of Old Mother Nature, Peter blurted out the whole thing. He told Jimmy just what he thought of Old Mother Nature—how unfair he considered her. "Jumper and I are just alike excepting in size. We have the same enemies. Why should he have the protection of a white coat in Winter and I not have it?" he concluded.

40 There was no other mention of Peter Rabbit's children in 1917.

Jimmy shook his head reproachfully. “Peter,” said he, “I’m ashamed of you. I certainly am ashamed of you. You are the very last one I would have suspected of thinking Old Mother Nature doesn’t know what she is about. I certainly am ashamed of you. You know just as well as I do that she never gives a thing to any one unless it is really needed. She has given Jumper the Hare a white coat in Winter because he needs it. Without it he would have nothing but those long legs of his to get him out of danger, and you know very well that Old Man Coyote and some of his other enemies can run quite as far as he can. Now you are so small that you can slip into all sorts of places, hollow logs, holes in the ground, and under old stumps, bramble-tangles, places of safety that Jumper cannot possibly get into. And here you are moping about filled with envy because Jumper has something you haven’t and don’t need. Shame on you, Peter! Shame on you!”

Peter hung his head. Suddenly he saw the truth. He saw that what Jimmy Skunk had said was so. He had no real need of a white coat, while Jumper had. He lifted his head and looked Jimmy Skunk straight in the face.

“Jimmy,” said he, “I’ll beat you across to the Green Forest, and on the way we’ll forget that there ever was anybody so silly as I.”

STORY 1829. December 21, 1917

Peter Rabbit Has a Funny Feeling

Peter Rabbit sat in the far corner of the Old Orchard, where, under an old apple tree, Johnny Chuck has his home, and just as is always the case when he goes there in Winter, Peter had a funny feeling. It was sort of a creepy feeling. The fact is Peter never could get used to the fact that somewhere deep down in a chamber at the end of that hole Johnny Chuck was asleep and would remain asleep until the coming of sweet Mistress Spring.

He knew it was so. Anyway, everybody said it was so. Besides there never was a sign of Johnny Chuck during the months of snow and ice, but with the coming of Mistress Spring each year Johnny Chuck appeared in his doorway, very sleepy, very thin, and knowing nothing at all about what had been going on during the Winter.

So Peter was forced to believe that what everybody, including Johnny Chuck himself, said was true must be so. But that didn’t help him understand it, and so whenever he came that way and thought of Johnny Chuck somewhere down below fast asleep, he had a funny feeling.

It was so now. Peter sat and stared at Johnny Chuck’s doorway, partly filled with snow, and tried to imagine what it would be like to sleep day after day and week after week and month after month without once waking up and without once eating. It was this last that always was too much for Peter. You know, Peter thinks much of his stomach. He could in a way picture to himself a long, long sleep[41] but when he tried to imagine going all that time without eating it always was too much for him and made that funny feeling funnier than ever.

41 See STORY 273, 1912, where Peter Rabbit tried to do just this.

Sammy Jay happened along as Peter sat staring at Johnny Chuck's doorway. Thinking of making a call on our old friend?" he asked.

"No! O, no! No, indeed!" exclaimed Peter, looking a bit startled and backing away a few steps. "I hadn't thought of such a thing, Sammy Jay."

"Why not?" persisted Sammy. "Haven't you ever seen Johnny Chuck asleep for the Winter?"

"No," replied Peter promptly. "Have you?"

Sammy laughed. "Hardly," said he. "How could I? But I'll tell you one thing, Peter Rabbit, if I were a four-legged animal small enough to go in that hole I would have seen Johnny Chuck asleep long before this."

"But that is his own private house," exclaimed Peter, "and it wouldn't be right for anyone else to enter it."

"Piffle! Piffle! Piffle! Piffle!" cried Sammy Jay. "Who would know it? Certainly not Johnny Chuck, if he is truly asleep as everyone says he is. The only reason you don't do it is that you are afraid, Peter." With a scornful flirt of his wings Sammy flew away.

For a long time, Peter sat right where he was. Sammy Jay had put a new thought in his head, and his natural curiosity had jumped at the idea. It urged him to do just what Sammy Jay had suggested. His better feelings told him that he had no business in Johnny Chuck's house. And every time he thought of himself creeping down that long hall that funny feeling swept over him stronger than ever.

STORY 1830. December 22, 1917

Inside Johnny Chuck's House

Peter Rabbit was inside Johnny Chuck's house. Yes, sir, he was. He wasn't very far inside, but he was inside. To this day he declares that he never, never would have done such a thing of his own accord. Perhaps he I wouldn't, but—well it's of no use to try to decide what he would or wouldn't have done if he hadn't done just what he did do.

You see he was sitting there in front of Johnny Chuck's house down in the far corner of the Old Orchard quite upset by Sammy Jay's suggestion that he should go down inside and see just how Johnny Chuck sleeps the Winter away. His better feelings told him that he shouldn't think of such a thing. His curiosity demanded that he do it at once. And his timidity, for you know Peter is naturally very, very timid, kept him sitting right where he was.

How it would have ended nobody knows, not even Peter himself, had not Bowser the Hound happened along. Peter was so busy trying to decide between his better feelings and his curiosity that he gave no heed to other things. The result was that Bowser was in a jump and a half of Peter before Peter knew that he was anywhere about. There was just one thing to do and Peter did it. He did it without stopping to

think at all. He dived head first in at Johnny Chuck's doorway. In fact he was inside before he realized where he was. He didn't go far down that long, dark hall. He didn't need to. That entrance was between two spreading roots of an old apple tree and Bowser couldn't have dug his way in even if the ground had not been frozen. That was why Johnny Chuck had made his home right there.

So Peter went only a little way inside and then turned to grin at Bowser in the most provoking way. Of course Bowser could see him and it provoked him greatly. He barked himself hoarse and he scratched at the doorway until his toes were sore. After a while Peter grew tired of making faces at Bowser.

"I'm in here," thought he, "and being here I may as well see just what this house of Johnny Chuck's is like. I don't suppose it is much different from some of his old deserted houses which I use now and then for safety but being here I may as well find out. I'm sure Johnny wouldn't object if he were here."

So little by little Peter crept farther and farther down the long hall toward Johnny Chuck's bedroom. All the time he had a guilty feeling, a feeling that he was doing something of which he ought to be ashamed. And all the time curiosity kept urging him on. He would move forward a step, then stop and listen. Hearing nothing he would go forward another step and then listen again. The only sounds he heard were the thumping of his own heart and the voice of Bowser the Hound outside. Nearer and nearer to Johnny Chuck's bedroom crept Peter and still there wasn't the teeniest weeniest sound from within.

"I should think I would hear him breathing in his sleep," thought Peter, and paused to listen with all his might. But he didn't hear Johnny Chuck breathing. There wasn't a thing to hint that there was another living creature in there.

"I don't believe there is," muttered Peter.

Just then he reached Johnny Chuck's bedroom.

STORY 1831. December 24, 1917

Johnny Chuck's Queer Christmas

> "I wish you a happy Christmas. That means more than just a merry Christmas. Nothing equals true happiness, so I wish you again a happy Christmas." PETER RABBIT.

It just happened that it was on Christmas morning that Peter Rabbit was frightened by Bowser the Hound into seeking safety in Johnny Chuck's house. There wasn't anything about Johnny Chuck's house to make anyone think of Christmas. No, sir, there wasn't the least thing about that house to remind anybody of the joy of Christmas. In fact, there was nothing to suggest any kind of joy. You have seen a house closed for the Winter, everybody gone away. Of course you have. There is nothing joyous about such a house, is there? Well, Johnny Chuck's house was just like that. It is true that Johnny Chuck hadn't gone away. He was still there, but he might just as well have been away. In fact, Peter Rabbit would have felt more comfortable if he had been away.

Illustrations. December 17 to December 22, 1917.

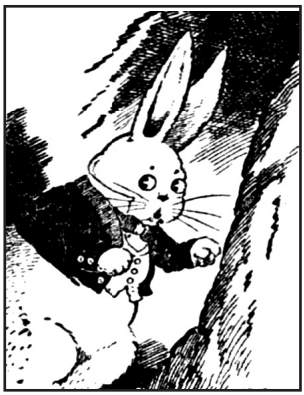
1825. Jumper's Mind is Relieved
"Do you remember when we last met how worried I was?" asked Jumper.

1826. A Test of Two Coats
They darted behind the little patch of brush and then separated.

1827. Peter Rabbit Broods
"For goodness sake, Peter Rabbit, whatever is the matter with you?" demanded little Mrs. Peter.

1828. Jimmy Skunk Shames Peter Rabbit
"Anything the matter with any of the children?" asked Jimmy.

1829. Peter Rabbit Has a Funny Feeling
"Piffle!" cried Sammy Jay. "Who would know it?"



1830. Inside Johnny Chuck's House
"I should think I would hear him breathing in his sleep," thought Peter.

You see it was this way: When Peter found himself actually inside Johnny Chuck's doorway his curiosity at once suggested that he should take this chance to see just how Johnny Chuck looks when he is asleep for the Winter. Peter's better feelings had urged him not to, but his curiosity was the stronger and so Peter had crept down the long hall to Johnny Chuck's bedroom at the end. There was one thing Peter noticed before he reached Johnny's bedroom and this was that it was decidedly warmer down there than near the doorway. In fact, it was quite comfortably warm, and also it was dry down there. Johnny had wisely dug below the deepest point to which Jack Frost would be able to freeze the ground. Jack Frost couldn't possibly reach in and pinch him there.

At last Peter reached Johnny Chuck's bedroom, and there he paused for some time. He was afraid to go in. He didn't know why, but he was afraid. He wanted to run away—to get outside. It just didn't seem real that Johnny Chuck was there asleep and had been there asleep all the time since the first cold weather weeks before. It gave Peter that funny, creepy feeling more than ever.

So Peter paused for a long time at the entrance to Johnny Chuck's bedroom, eager to go in, yet wanting to run away. At last curiosity won over fear, and Peter stole in very much like a thief. Johnny Chuck was there curled up in his bed of dry grass. He didn't move. He didn't make the least sign that he knew Peter was there. Peter thumped the floor lightly with one of his hind feet. Many times in the Summer had he thumped to Johnny Chuck in just that way. At the same time, he cried "Merry Christmas!" for he suddenly remembered what day it was.

Nothing happened. Johnny Chuck made no reply. He didn't move. Peter thumped louder than before. Still Johnny didn't move. Peter reached out and touched him gently. Johnny showed no signs of having felt that touch. Peter reached over and gave him a push, but he might just as well have pushed a stone or a block of wood. Of a sudden something like a panic took possession of Peter Rabbit, and he turned and hurried up to the doorway of Johnny Chuck's house. Bowser the Hound was still outside, but he was alive and awake, very much alive and very much awake. Somehow it made Peter feel better just to see and listen to Bowser. Bowser was at least real, and somehow Johnny Chuck didn't seem real.

Yet Johnny Chuck was real, just as real as Bowser the Hound. He was just as much alive as was Bowser the Hound although he showed no signs of life that Peter could discover. The truth is Johnny was spending Christmas just as he had spent every day of the Winter so far and just as he would spend the remainder of the Winter—asleep. Wasn't that a queer way to spend Christmas? Yet Johnny Chuck's queer Christmas was the only kind of a Christmas in which he could have be a anything but unhappy. It was a queer Christmas as you look at it or as I look at it, but as Johnny Chuck looks at it, it wasn't queer at all. So there you are!

NO STORY. December 25, 1917

STORY 1832. December 26, 1917

Was Johnny Chuck Dead?

Peter Rabbit wished he never had thought of entering Johnny Chuck's house. He wished that Sammy Jay never had put it into his head to want to see Johnny Chuck asleep for the Winter. But for this he would have been satisfied to enter Johnny Chuck's house only far enough to escape from Bowser the Hound. He never, never would have thought of keeping on, way down to Johnny's bedroom. But Sammy Jay had put it into his head, and curiosity had done the rest. He had gone down to Johnny Chuck's bedroom, and he had found Johnny Chuck curled up there in his bed. But there had been something very queer about Johnny Chuck. He hadn't wakened when Peter had stamped. He hadn't wakened when Peter had touched him. Peter had had such a queer, creepy feeling that he had hurried back to the doorway of the house where he could see and hear Bowser the Hound and feel that things were just as he always had known them. Peter resolved that just as soon as Bowser went away he, Peter, would hurry home to the dear Old Brier Patch and never again would he enter uninvited anybody's house. But as he waited for Bowser to grow tired and go away, he kept wondering about Johnny Chuck. Curiosity kept urging him to go back for another look.

"Of course," thought Peter, "to sleep all Winter anyone would have to go very, very sound asleep indeed, but still I can't imagine anybody not waking when they were pushed the way I pushed Johnny Chuck. It doesn't seem to me natural. Besides, now that I think of it. Johnny felt queer. I—I—I wonder if it can be that Johnny Chuck is dead?"

A startled look crept into Peter's eyes at the thought.

The idea that Johnny Chuck might have died down there in his bedroom took possession of Peter. He couldn't think of anything else. Finally he just had to go back to make sure. He found Johnny just as he had left him. Johnny hadn't moved so much as a hair. Peter called to him softly, but Johnny didn't answer. Peter stamped with all his might. Many times had he warned Johnny Chuck of danger by stamping like that. Johnny remained just as he was, curled up in his bed. Peter listened for the sound of breathing, but there was none. Neither could Peter hear or feel Johnny's heartbeat. More than all this, Johnny felt strange to the touch. He felt cold. To touch him gave Peter an uncomfortable feeling. Finally, to make quite sure, Peter struck Johnny Chuck sharply.

"Wake up! Wake up!" he cried.

Johnny didn't wake up. Johnny remained just exactly as he had been. Then Peter Rabbit softly tiptoed away. Why he tiptoed he didn't know, seeing that he hadn't been able to waken Johnny Chuck in spite of all his efforts. On Peter's face was a worried look. When he reached the doorway, he found that Bowser the Hound had given up and left in disgust. Peter hopped out into the sunshine with a little gasp of relief. Then he turned and looked back at Johnny Chuck's house and his forehead was all wrinkled with perplexity. Was Johnny Chuck dead? Was that just his cold lifeless body down there? It seemed so, and yet supposing it wasn't so? Peter wished he knew.

STORY 1833. December 27, 1917

Peter Decides to Hold His Tongue

When you're uncertain what you know
Hold still your tongue and keep it so.

Peter Rabbit says that he can give no better advice than that. Peter ought to know, for his tongue has led him into all sorts of trouble. He says it is all right to talk when you are absolutely sure of what you are talking about, but that if there is the least doubt in your own mind, it is far wiser to let others do the talking.

When Peter finally left Johnny Chuck's house he was so upset he didn't know what to do. You remember he had found Johnny Chuck curled up in his bed down in his bedroom and that nothing Peter could do brought the least sign of life from Johnny. So Peter was terribly upset. It seemed to him that his old friend Johnny Chuck must certainly be dead. To Peter he had every appearance of being dead. If he was dead Peter wanted to spread the news. You know there is nothing Peter so delights in as being the bearer of news, be it good or bad. Aren't some people funny that way?

Then, again, if Johnny was dead, Peter would feel dreadfully, for he and Johnny were such longtime friends. But he didn't want to feel dreadfully over nothing. No, indeed. He didn't want anything like that. And if it should happen that Johnny wasn't dead and he, Peter, had spread the news that he was dead, he never, never would hear the end of it. So Peter wisely decided to hold his tongue for a while. It would be safer.

Once back in the dear Old Brier Patch Peter tried his best to forget all about Johnny Chuck. But the things you want to forget are just the things that won't be forgotten. I guess you know all about that. It was just so with Peter. He kept thinking and thinking about Johnny Chuck, and wondering and wondering. Every day he visited the Old Orchard, in the far corner of which is Johnny Chuck's house, and there he would sit staring at the doorway for the longest time. Once in a while, he would venture down inside for a look at Johnny. Always he found Johnny just as when he had first seen him there. So far as Peter could see there was nothing, absolutely nothing, to show that Johnny was alive.

Each time Peter went away more doubtful than ever. That is, he was more doubtful of Johnny being alive. He just couldn't believe that there could be life in that cold little body curled up underground.

"If he's asleep it's the funniest kind of sleep I've ever heard of," muttered Peter after one of these visits. "At one time or another I've seen most of my neighbors asleep, but never one that didn't wake up at the least sound close by. Johnny Chuck can't be wakened and that is all there is to it, and anybody that can't be wakened must be dead. So Johnny Chuck is dead and I'm going right away to tell everybody, so there!"

Peter took two or three quick hops, then a few slower ones and finally stopped altogether. Doubt once more wrinkled his brow in little worried puckers.

"If he shouldn't be dead, if he shouldn't be, I'd never hear the last of it," muttered Peter. "I guess I'll hold my tongue a while longer."

He did, and it was well he did. Johnny Chuck wasn't dead, but was in that strange and wonderful sleep called hibernation, a sleep which is not at all like ordinary sleep, and from which sometimes there is no waking for many months. It is one of Old Mother Nature's greatest wonders. How Peter would have been laughed at in the Spring when Johnny Chuck was wakened by sweet Mistress Spring had he gone about telling that Johnny Chuck was dead!

STORY 1834. December 28, 1917

The Gray Terror

Peter Rabbit soon forgot about Johnny Chuck. At least he forgot about Johnny for the time being. You see he heard something which put all thought of Johnny Chuck out of his head. It was Blacky the Crow who brought the news to the dear Old Brier Patch. He happened along just as Peter was preparing to run over to the Green Forest.

"Caw, caw!" called Blacky. "Going somewhere, Peter?"

"Perhaps so and perhaps not. What if I am?" replied Peter, who is always a little suspicious of Blacky the Crow.

"O, nothing. That is nothing very much. The dear Old Brier Patch would look pretty good to me if I were in your place just now," drawled Blacky in a way which he knows is provoking.

Peter was minded to pay Blacky no further attention, but there was something about the way in which Blacky spoke that made Peter uneasy. You know you sometimes can tell by the sound of a voice whether the speaker means what he says or not. There was something in Blacky's voice that led Peter to think that Blacky really meant what he said.

"Why is the Old Brier Patch any better for me just now than any other time?" Peter demanded.

"O, just because," drawled Blacky, just to tease Peter.

"Why?" demanded Peter, stamping fiercely.

"Be careful, Peter. Be careful. You might hurt your feet that way," teased Blacky.

Peter started to get real angry. Then he thought better of it. He knew that nothing would please Blacky more than to see him lose his temper. He knew, too, that that would be the surest way of not finding out what he wanted to know. So he grinned good naturedly.

"When you get through having fun trying to tease me, please tell me why it is that you think it best for me to stay in the dear Old Briar Patch just now. At first, I thought you were fooling, but I know now that there is some reason for what you said, Blacky. Now be a good fellow and tell me," pleaded Peter.

Blacky's shrewd little eyes twinkled. He knew that it was of no use to try to tease Peter anymore because it was quite evident that Peter didn't intend to be teased. And

as at heart he is not as black as his coat, despite what some people say, he leaned down from the top of a little tree where he had alighted and said in a low voice:

"The Gray Terror has come down from the North, Peter, and that is why if I were in your place I wouldn't get far away from the Old Brier Patch."

Peter sat up quickly and looked up at Blacky anxiously. "Do you mean that Mr. Goshawk really has come to the Green Forest?" he asked.

Blacky nodded. "I had a narrow escape from him myself this very morning," said he. "It's a wonder I'm here to tell of it. He's just as swift of wing as ever."

Peter sighed.

"I think I'll stay right here," said he. "When that fellow is around, the thickest bramble-tangle isn't any too thick to suit me. I'm much obliged to you for the warning, Blacky. I certainly am. As long as he is about there'll be some worried people in the Green Forest. I do hope Mrs. Grouse knows he has arrived."

"She does," replied Blacky. "It cost her a few feathers to find it out, but she was lucky just as I was and got away."

STORY 1835. December 29, 1917

Discussing Mr. Goshawk

The news that the Gray Terror, as the little people of the Green Forest have learned to call fierce and cruel Mr. Goshawk, had come down from the North where he makes his home, was very disturbing. Peter Rabbit was very grateful to Blacky the Crow for warning him. He told Blacky so.

"That's all right," replied Blacky gruffly. He was pleased, but he didn't like to show it and so spoke gruffly. It isn't very often that people thank Blacky for anything. "That's all right, Peter. I'd do that for my worst enemy at a time like this. When every one of us is in such danger we simply must help each other. You're lucky to have such a safe place to stay in as the Old Brier Patch. The Gray Terror never can get you in here. A lot of us are not so lucky. Do you know, Peter, I hate to think of what may be happening over there?"

Blacky nodded toward the Green Forest.

"I don't dare go back there myself," he continued. "I wouldn't feel safe a second."

"Where will you go when night comes?" asked Peter.

"I don't know," replied Blacky with a worried look. "I've got to find some other place."

"Come right here and spend it in the Old Brier Patch. I'd love to have you," cried Peter generously.

"Thank you, Peter," replied Blacky. "The invitation does your heart credit, but I can't accept."

"Why not?" asked Peter. "I don't see any reason why you can't."

"Use your thinker," chuckled Blacky. "Use your thinker, Peter. I may be a tough old bird, but just the same I have to have shelter from cold winds when I sleep. Also to sleep in peace I must be hidden where Hooty the Owl is not likely to see me. So thanking you just the same, I think I'll have to look for a pine or a spruce or a hemlock tree somewhere away from the Green Forest, where I can spend my nights as long as that robber remains in the Green Forest. Say, do you know what they say about him?"

"What?" cried Peter.

"That he kills just for the sake of killing," declared Blacky. "He's like Shadow the Weasel in that respect. He's dreadful when he gets into a flock of birds. He'll kill as many as he can, sometimes four or five times as many as he can possibly eat. I'm glad he doesn't make his home here. If he did, I know one person, and that one is Blacky the Crow, who would leave these parts in a hurry. Have you ever seen him, Peter?"

Peter nodded.

"I've seen him a lot closer than I ever want to see him again," said he.

"Handsome, isn't he?" replied Blacky. "He certainly is," replied Peter. "I can't understand why Old Mother Nature ever gave such a heartless robber as he is such a handsome blue-gray coat. And how he can fly! By the way, Blacky, who is that headed this way?"

Blacky looked toward the Green Forest. Sailing straight toward the deaf Old Brier Patch was a big broad-winged bird. A look of fear crept into Blacky's eyes, something you will seldom see there.

"It's Mr. Goshawk himself," gasped Blacky. "I think if you don't mind, I'll join you under that thickest bramble bush, Peter."

"Come right along," replied Peter warmly, and Blacky did.

STORY 1836. December 31, 1917

The Great Fear

Straight over the dear old Brier Patch sailed the Gray Terror, who, as you know, is Mr. Goshawk. Straight over the dear Old Brier Patch he sailed and glared down with eyes that seemed to burn with such fierceness that even Blacky the Crow, bold as he is, could not look up at them but turned his head away and shivered. You remember that Blacky was crouching under the thickest bramble bush in the dear Old Brier Patch beside Peter Rabbit. Mr. Goshawk laughed harshly at sight of Blacky squatting on the ground under that bramble bush.

"How long since you took to living in the Old Brier Patch, you black rascal?" he called mockingly.

Blacky made no reply. He couldn't. He was too frightened to even feel a sense of shame at having sought the ground for safety. Of course there was no reason to feel

ashamed, but the feathered folk who live in the tree-tops or spend most of their time in the air are rather inclined to look down on those who are not so strong or clever of wing as they. Blacky the Crow spends a great deal of time on the ground looking for food, but for safety he trusts to his wings as a rule. He couldn't remember ever having done such a thing before as he was now doing. It shows how great was his fear of Mr. Goshawk, the Gray Terror.

And if bold, impudent, clever Blacky was so frightened, just imagine the fear that swept over the other little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows. It was even greater than the fear which they had felt when Yowler the Bobcat had made his home in the Green Forest for a while. Yowler had hunted and killed only to satisfy his appetite: Mr. Goshawk hunted and killed from sheer love of it. That was the dreadful thing about it. They could have forgiven him had he hunted for food only, as do most of his cousins of the Hawk family, but he would kill many times what he could eat. Only those who live on the ground feared Yowler, but with Mr. Goshawk, it made no difference where they were or whether they ran or flew. He could strike down a swift-winged bird in mid-air as easily as he could seize an unsuspecting Wood Mouse. He hunted everywhere—in the Green Forest, on the Green Meadows, in the Old Orchard and in the Old Pasture.

So, with his coming a great fear swept over all the little people, such fear as they had known only when the Red Terror, which is fire, had swept across the Old Pasture and threatened to destroy the Green Forest[42]. Then the fear was for a day only, but this fear was every day and would be every day so long as Mr. Goshawk should stay. To those who feed by night it made less difference than to those who have eyes for daylight only, for this robber is a bird of the day and not of the night. But even to the former it made a difference. It meant that night or day they could not move without danger from above—from Hooty the Owl at night and the Gray Terror by day.

"It wouldn't be so bad," complained Peter Rabbit to little Mrs. Peter, "if it were not Winter. If Mr. Goshawk came down from the North at a season when food is plentiful, and when the trees and bushes are covered with leaves, it would not be so bad. But he doesn't. He comes when, at best, food is hard to get and when only in that part of the Green Forest where the pine trees and the hemlock trees and the spruce trees grow is there anything under which to hide. I suppose I ought to be thankful that I have the dear Old Brier Patch to be safe in, but there is getting to be mighty little to eat here, and if he stays all the rest of the Winter I don't know what we will do. When Blacky the Crow comes in here for safety, things are pretty bad. Yes, sir, they are. And the worst of it is I don't see what we can do about it. I don't see what anybody can do about it."

42 STORY 1164, 1915.

Illustrations. December 24 to December 31, 1917.

1831. Johnny Chuck's Queer Christmas
At the same time, he cried "Merry Christmas!"

1832. Was Johnny Chuck Dead?
He found Johnny just as he had left him.

1833. Peter Decides to Hold His Tongue
There he would sit staring at the doorway for the longest time.

1834. The Gray Terror
"The Gray Terror has come down from the north, Peter."

1835. Discussing Mr. Goshawk
"Where will you go when night comes?" asked Peter.

1836. The Great Fear
"How long since you took to living in the Old Briar Patch, you black rascal!" he called mockingly.

Appendix 1. 1917 Thornton W. Burgess Newspaper Articles

Introduction.

This appendix collects various newspaper articles written by or reporting about Thornton W. Burgess in 1917. This includes letters written in support of gray squirrels, skunks, and the food potential of wild deer, as well as a complimentary review in the *New York Tribune* and a poem in praise of Burgess by a reader in the *Kansas City Star*.

Of particular interest is a widely circulated article ("Jack Porcupine and Jimmy Skunk") written by Burgess in his role as a member of "The Vigilantes," a collective of prominent artists and writers organized to produce war-time propaganda. This article was the only one of Burgess's Vigilante contributions that directly referred to his animal characters. He would repeat the message about "preparedness" in a Jimmy Skunk story in the Little Stories for Bedtime feature later that year.

He Defends "Happy Jack"

Gray Squirrel No Menace to Birds, Thornton W. Burgess Says

House Cat, Instead, Is to Blame for Depredations in Milwaukee, the Celebrated Naturalist Believes.

The *Milwaukee Journal* recently wrote to Thornton W. Burgess, telling him of the campaign proposed by some residents of East Milwaukee to exterminate the gray squirrels of the neighborhood because of alleged tracks by the squirrels upon birds. The accompanying letter was written by Mr. Burgess in response. Mr. Burgess is a celebrated naturalist, a friend of both the birds and squirrels. He has studied animals and has written several books on the subject of wild life He is the author of The Bedtime Stories, which have given pleasure to many thousands of readers.

Poor Happy Jack Squirrel! He will get into mischief sometimes, and when he is caught at it, straightway his little gray shoulders must bear the burden of blame for all the mischief of the neighborhood, real or fancied. I will venture to assert that if the good people who are so anxious to exterminate the gray squirrels for the laudable purpose of bringing back the birds will first kill or confine all the cats of the neighborhood, it will be found that this particular charge against Happy Jack is based almost wholly on circumstantial evidence, and the case will fall through. The house cat is today the country over a greater agent of destruction to bird life than all other forces combined, with the possible exception of ubiquitous shotgun and air rifle, and as man is responsible for the latter, so also is he responsible for the cat.

Cat is a hunter

Every cat, no matter how well fed, pampered and petted, is a hunter of birds. It is the animal's nature. The cat hunts for the sheer pleasure of the hunt, not from the spur of hunger. The gray squirrel, on the contrary, is not a hunter of birds. It is true that if in his rambles through the trees he happens across a nest of eggs, he will eat them. I

suspect that he is occasionally guilty of dining on tender young nestlings. But these are the happenings of chance. He does not go hunting for nests, as does his cousin, Chatterer, the Red Squirrel. And in any given neighborhood the loss to bird life through the destruction of eggs and young by gray squirrels is but a fraction of the loss from the pernicious activities of the cats of that same neighborhood.

I question if anywhere around Milwaukee are gray squirrels more numerous than they are about my home. Rarely do I look out of the window at any hour of the day without seeing one to three or four. Yet in three out of four small trees in front of my house birds nested last spring undisturbed by the squirrels. This winter I established a feeding station for the birds in my backyard and in this connection I have had my troubles with Happy Jack. He promptly assumed that the seeds in that food hopper were intended for him and he ate them at a rate that gave the birds no chance. So I undertook to teach him that others have equal rights with him, and the folly of greed and selfishness. When the hopper was empty. I put in it a spoonful of grain and seed well sprinkled with red pepper.

Happy Jack gets a surprise.

Hardly was my back turned when Happy Jack was helping himself as greedily as ever. But the second mouthful something bit his tongue. He climbed upon the trellis to rub his nose and think it over. Evidently he made up his mind that it was imagination, for he turned and scampered back for some more. Two minutes later, however, he had changed his mind again. This time he decided that there was something wrong about that place, for he jumped down and hurried over to a tall oak, which he climbed. There he sat rubbing his nose and shaking his head and scolding. I then took out the peppered seeds and put in nice, fresh seeds and soon the birds were feasting happily. Happy Jack has kept away. If he returns, I shall fix him another warm meal in just the same way and after one or two more such experiences I am quite sure I will have no more trouble from him. I haven't harmed him in the least and I have made it possible for my little feathered friends to enjoy my spread for them.

Squirrels sometimes do real mischief by getting into houses. If this cannot be prevented by means of covering their holes with tin it may be best to get rid of the offending individuals. They have then become true pests, and like the lawbreaker of the human race must suffer the consequences. But as for a wholesale killing of the squirrels, God forbid!

A companionable animal

Of all our wild animals the gray squirrel is far and away the most companionable and at the same time one of the most beautiful. None other meets our advances so readily. None other so quickly adapts himself to association with man. He is one of the strongest and best links between the wild life and the human race. Don't destroy it. He is a joy to children, and the hearts of grownups must have hardened with age if it is less than a joy to them to see him about. He reanimates a dead and dreary landscape in winter. He will fearlessly eat from your hand: don't turn that hand against him.

Killing the squirrels will not bring back the birds to an appreciable extent. A far

more effective method will be the suppression of the cat and the air rifle, also the English sparrow, and by putting up nesting boxes, the placing of food and water where the birds may get them readily and safely, the planting of berry bearing shrubs and in the spring the scattering of materials for nest building. I live in a city, yet both birds and squirrels abound about my home. I'm not from Missouri, but I've yet to be shown that Happy Jack is seriously inimical to the welfare of the birds. Kill, if you must, the individual which has been proven a pest, but protect the race. I sincerely hope that the authorities will not grant a permit for wholesale destruction of the squirrels.

The mutual friend of Happy Jack and the feathered folk, Thornton W. Burgess, Springfield, Mass.

(*Kansas City Star.* January 19, 1917)

A Plea for the Squirrel

Squirrels do not kill birds, according to the evidence given by Thornton W. Burgess, naturalist and writer of "Little Bedtime Stories," which are read to every small child whose parents take *The Tulsa Democrat*. Burgess wrote to save the lives of the squirrels in a Wisconsin neighborhood where the residents were threatening to destroy them because it was alleged that they were killing the birds and driving them away.

"Watch the cats in the neighborhood," Burgess told them, "and the squirrels will have an alibi."

He told of a gray squirrel that stole the food he put out for birds for even Mr. Burgess, friend of the squirrel must admit that he will steal. He has not been taught that it is wrong. The naturalist saw this marauder take the seeds he had put out for the birds and prepared a trap for him. He sprinkled the seeds with red pepper. The squirrel tried it three times, but after that he could not be induced to go near the cup where the feed for the birds was set out.

Burgess says the squirrel is the most companionable of all the animals, though tricky and with an inclination to steal when there is an opportunity. He advises that killing the squirrels will not bring back the birds. In fact, he refuses to believe that the squirrels are responsible at all. Mr. Burgess has studied wild animals and know their habits. He also has observed the domesticated cat and knows its fondness for birds.

Others know it too. In many households there is an empty cage which tells its mute story.

(*The Tulsa Democrat*. January 22, 1917.)

Jimmy Skunk Man's Friend

Burgess, Writer of Bedtime Stories, Tells How He Destroys Harmful Beetles.

With a little mountain of letters still unopened the Bedtime Stories club has

increased its membership immensely over the weekend.

The Statesman is exceedingly proud of its new club. The editor received another letter from Thornton W. Burgess yesterday, in which he expresses his joy at the manner in which the young readers of *The Statesman* are taking hold of the idea. He says he believes it will mean a great organization, which will do much to teach lessons of kindness to dumb animals and will do much to repair the economic mistake which man has made in his treatment of them.

You know, little folks, that Mr. Man has not been so wise in the past as he is going to be in the future. He has ruthlessly killed a great many birds and animals which were not only absolutely harmless, but also of a great benefit to him.

Take Jimmy Skunk, for instance. Now, Mr. Man has always been a terrible enemy of Jimmy Skunk. He has killed him off so fast that in some sections there are no more at all. Then, Mr. Man discovered that he had made a great mistake. Jimmy Skunk lived on beetles that did all sorts of harm to growing crops and trees. Jimmy was the policeman of the fields and woods who kept these beetles down to a safe number.

Poor Jimmy Has Suffered.

Mr. Man has seen his mistake now. In many sections of the country the farmers are protecting Jimmy Skunk now and allowing no persons to hunt him. You see Jimmy Skunk's fur is quite valuable, and there are many hunters who trapped and killed the little fellow and made a living out of selling his skin. But the farmers are stopping all that now. They have found that Jimmy is one of their best friends.

He Knows Real Friends.

So it is going along the line. Mr. Burgess has made a study of these things and he knows the little people who are real friends of the farmers, and that is what he writes about. So he is glad all you young people are joining the club to help to take care of the Little People of the Green Forest and Meadows....

(*The Idaho Statesman*. January 29, 1917)

Editorial: A Born Story Teller

To very few human beings has the gift been given of telling stories. To few still has the ability been granted to tell stories day by day, while still keeping to the high standard of the occasional story-teller. But Thornton W. Burgess possesses both these rich gifts. His Bed Time stories in *The Eagle* hold the interest of grown-ups as well as of children—and day by day he is able to turn out a story, without any let-down in interest or in literary quality.

Dr. Forbush, the specialist in child training, writing in *The Eagle* on stories for children, and decrying the unusual and terrifying in such stories, says: "Use all the fancy you like, but always leave the sense of perfect certainty." And that's the best thing about Mr. Burgess' stories. They are bred of a rich fancy, but they can be read at

night-time to the little ones without sending them burrowing under the covers when mother has tucked them in bed and turned out the light.

(*Wichita Eagle*, March 25, 1917)

Nature Stories for Children.

The Adventures of Paddy the Beaver

There is no type of fiction for children of today that parents can more profitably give their children than Thornton W. Burgess's two animal stories about "Paddy the Beaver" and "Mrs. Quack."

In the first place, the true value of teaching a child natural history as a necessary part of his education and fitness for life has too long been under-estimated. People are only just realizing that the United States government would not appropriate large sums for maintaining the Biological Survey if the birds and animals were not of vital importance in the everyday life of the nation, and not mere subjects for a hobby, or art, or aesthetic satisfaction. On general principles, children should have stories that make for sympathy toward the wild creatures, and contain accurate information about the habits, characters and usefulness of the birds and animals.

This is exactly what children will find in these two books. Mr. Burgess's style is so engaging and addressed to the young so understandingly in their own terms that were there no real natural history at all behind his stories a child would still be entertained. But Mr. Burgess has not, like so many commercial writers of today, taken advantage of his technical cleverness to give rubbish and inaccuracy a meretricious appearance of entertainment. His facts of natural history will stand the scrutiny of naturalists, and it is this which gives his stories a genuine ring which no mere cleverness could. Though, according to the illustrations at least, his animal and bird characters wear clothes, even as did those in "Alice in Wonderland," and though they are endowed with human speech, this is merely a legitimate and vivid way of intensifying a child's interest in those human attributes which make the wild creatures naturally interesting to children, in zoos or in the wild state. In many little ways, such as through the intelligence and kind-heartedness of Farmer Brown's boy, Mr. Burgess manages to fill the minds of his young readers with ideas of fair play toward the wild creatures and the reasonableness of bird and animal protection. He does this unobtrusively and naturally—never in the preachy manner of the older writers.

We recommend Mr. Burgess's stories most highly. Children while reading what they think of merely as "good stories" will unconsciously absorb many facts of natural history and will develop the friendly, interested attitude toward birds and animals which is today a mark of education and good citizenship. It would be unfair not to compliment Mr. Burgess himself on his good work for our wild friends.

(*New York Tribune*, April 14, 1917)

Deer Meat Plan is Practicable

Thornton W. Burgess Declares Animals Would Furnish Food Supply.

Deer propagation on a large reservation with the intent of supplying meat cheaply to the public has been suggested as a practicable feature of food conservation, and Thornton W. Burgess of this city, a well-known author and naturalist, describes it as a feasible idea. Such a proceeding would entail the abolition of the open season, and this is something that Mr. Burgess is in favor of.

Mr. Burgess quoted William Temple Hornaday of the New York Zoological Park as stating that this country is overlooking a large tangible supply of food in the white-tail deer. The animals contain possibilities that cannot be ignored, for they propagate very quickly and furnish the best sort of meat. Anyone who has 100 acres fenced in can raise deer easily. The Virginia white-tail deer roams over this State and over the country, and with care 2,000,000 deer could be raised each year for food without diminishing the supply.

The deer must be fenced in, if an extra effort is to be made to raise them, and while they may be taken care of with practically no expense, during the winter they would have to be provided with a certain amount of hay. Running wild they subsist on boughs and shrubbery but being more congested on a reservation they would need more food. More wardens would be needed to see that poachers did not destroy them.

There is enough land in the country to feed all the deer and give them plenty of running territory without trespassing on farmland. In Pennsylvania there are a number of large areas of forest where many deer roam. In each of these areas is a portion of land fenced off with a single barbed wire, which is known as the sanctuary. Inside this sanctuary no deer may be shot, even in the open season. The deer discover this safe region easily and the result is that they are breeding rapidly there.

A buck carries several does for his mates and this shows that the number of bucks may be cut down, while the does must be conserved for rapid propagation. In the present state of the laws more does are shot each year than bucks and this is bad for the deer. Mr. Burgess was quite optimistic about the good results that would follow a campaign of deer propagation for food and would like to see such a thing happen.

(*The Springfield Union*, April 15, 1917)

Jack Porcupine and Jimmy Skunk

By Thornton Burgess, of the Vigilantes

The first law of Old Mother Nature ever has been, is, and ever will be, self-preservation. To this end she has devised countless expedients for protection and defense. She is the original exponent of preparedness. In every phase of life, you will find it. It is one of the most impressive manifestations of life in what we are pleased to term the lower orders.

Last summer I encountered a porcupine in the depths of the woods. I blocked his path. Did he meekly turn aside? Not a bit of it. He was in his own domain wherein he had definite rights. Without pause he came straight on. There was no manifestation of anger, merely a slight lifting and rustling of the barbed quills with which he was armed. I wasn't a threat; it was a warning. He was prepared, not for offense but for defense. I decided not to meddle with his affairs and stepped aside. He went his way calmly and unafraid.

On several occasions I have met Jimmy Skunk. We always parted friends. I trust we always shall. I cannot recall a single occasion on which he manifested the lease fear. He was peacefully inclined, with no desire to interfere with me and supreme confidence that I would not interfere with him. At a suggestion of an overt act on my part which might be construed as unfriendly there was a polite lifting of his banner. Nor was this a threat. It was a courteous hint that he was prepared. He is the most perfect example of the efficiency of preparedness of which I know. He is powerfully armed, but the sole use he makes of his armament is in defense of his rights.

We as a nation may learn much from Mother Nature and her provisions for the safeguarding of the individual and the race. The only assurance of peace is the absolute conviction that we are fully prepared instantly to meet aggression. I believe that universal military training and service for a limited period would make for both the moral and physical upbuilding and welfare of the nation. It I would impress as nothing else could upon every individual the democracy for which our flag stands; the democracy which can come only from shoulder-to-shoulder service in a common cause-the cause of all.

The history of every war in which this nation has ever engaged is a pitiful arraignment of the stupendous folly of unpreparedness. Peace and the blessings of peace are for those only who are strong enough to command and demand them. We are once more at war. It is safe to say that we should not have been forced into war if we had had some form of universal military service which would have found us instantly prepared to maintain our rights and our self-respect. Might may not make right, but it goes far to maintain right. Thornton W. Burgess.

(*The Portsmouth Star*, April 27, 1917)

To Thornton W. Burgess

By Lee Shippey in *Kansas City Star*

To Thornton W. Burgess:
Who interests for long must surely teach;
  He must instruct who would for long amuse.
Yours is the gift the children's hearts to reach
  While storing minds with lore for daily use:
To broaden sympathies and knowledge, too,
  To teach unselfishness and traits worthwhile,
And, most of all, to guide them till they view

This world with eyes which see its tender smile.
What was the pool, you made the Smiling Pool.
What was the sun, is Jolly Mr. Sun,
And Merry Breezes are those zephyrs cool
Which lightly o'er the gay Green Meadows run—
Dear Mother Nature's gladness you make plain
To eyes which else had never seen or known.
And children taught to find it oft again
Will be refreshed and cheered when they they are grown.
Good seed you scatter broadcast through the land
And countless blessings shall be fruits thereof.
Kindness you sow with ever-giving hand.
And great must be the harvest of our-love!

(*Evening World-Herald*, September 24, 1917)

Appendix 2. Thornton W. Burgess Letters to Toronto Star Weekly

Introduction

Thornton Burgess continued writing personal letters to the Old Mother Nature Club page of the *Toronto Star Weekly* in 1917, though his contributions were less regular than the previous year. The letters ceased in August. Instead, the *Star Weekly* published excerpts from Burgess's new *Mother Nature's News* project (covered in Appendix 3). Subscriptions to *Mother Nature's News* would be the *Star Weekly's* prize for the best reader-submitted story for the rest of the year.

Burgess's letters covered great horned owls, gray squirrels, cross-bills, muskrats, tree frogs, flickers, toads, cowbirds, bullfrogs, snakes and invasive species, as well as the precarious lives of birds. He also used the *Toronto Star Weekly* as a platform for introducing his *People's Home Journal* Sanctuary Campaign (discussed in the introduction to this volume) to a Canadian audience. Some letters discussed topics that would also be featured in his newspaper animal stories, including the eyes and breathing methods of bullfrogs.

January 13, 1917.

Hooty, The Great Horned Owl, An Independent Bird

He Hasn't Any Friends in the Forest—But He Has Wonderful Ears

Dear Boys and Girls: Peter Rabbit wishes each of you and all of you a happy New Year. So do I, with all my heart. Happiness is a wonderful thing, and the greatest happiness comes from making others happy. Just you try making life happier and brighter for Peter Rabbit and all the other little people of the Green Forest and the Green Meadows this coming year and see how much, how very much, of happiness you I will win for yourselves.

The other day I happened across Hooty the Owl, and Hooty seemed very much upset about something. It took quite a while to find out what the trouble was, but at last I did. What do you think it was? Well, it was because he thought that we had slighted him. That is what it was. So just to make him feel easier and a little more kindly towards us I am going to tell you something about him in this letter, and then perhaps he won't be so short the next time I meet him.

"Hoot!" said he. "You folks make a terrible fuss about winter and feeding the little birds, but what about me? I never hear anybody pitying me or find anybody putting anything out for me to eat. Not that I care. I don't. I'd have you to know that I am quite able to take care of myself. You never find me running away from cold weather or complaining because of storms. I believe in each one taking care of himself. That's what I do."

Hooty fluffed out his feathers until he looked twice as big and important as he really is, and you know he is a big fellow anyway. "Do I ever go hungry? Hoot,

man! Did you ever go fishing and not get so much as a bite? Well, it's that way with me pretty often. There is many a day and night, too, that I can't find so much as a woodmouse, but I know that if I keep at it long enough I'll get something some time, so what is the use of worrying? And I always do get something, or I wouldn't be here now. Whoever can't take care of himself isn't fit to live. That's what I believe."

Of course Hooty wasn't altogether right in that. But it isn't to be wondered at that he feels that way. There isn't any more independent bird in the world than Hooty the Great Horned Owl. He hasn't any friends. Whatever he has he must get for himself. And so he has grown to be a fierce, bold hunter, of whom all smaller than himself and some not so small are afraid. The sound of his voice sends little shivers of fear over all the little forest people who are not safely hidden where his great claws cannot reach them. There is no sound that they dread more. Hooty knows this. So from a watch-tower, usually the top of a dead stub, he hoots and makes the sound as fierce as he can. Then he listens with those wonderful ears of his, listens for the rustle of a leaf or twig as some startled little sleeper stirs ever so little. As silently as a shadow Hooty floats to the spot and nine times in ten that is the end of the little sleeper, for Hooty's great eyes are almost as wonderful as his great ears. His ears and his eyes, and his silent flight, each necessary to the other two, enable him to get a living where one less gifted would starve.

The Great Horned Owl is not as big as he looks, for his feathers are long and fluffy. Nevertheless he is a big fellow with broad wings, cruel great claws, yellow eyes, and long ear-tufts. It is these latter which give him his name of Horned Owl. Of course he doesn't have any really, truly horns. His legs and feet are heavily feathered. If they were not he would not be able to stand the intense cold of a northern winter, as it is, he manages to do very nicely. He is a lover of the deep woods, and while I am afraid that there is little good we can say for him, he is a splendid example of independence and courage. He nests before the ice has begun to melt and while the forest is still white with snow. In this respect he is much like that other northern friend of whom I wrote last week, Whiskey John the Canada Jay. On a mountain not far from where I live Hooty had his home, and in it every year there were eggs by the 22nd of February. What do you think of that?

Hooty has many relatives, some of them as small as he is big. Perhaps later I will introduce you to some of them. Now I must close with one more hearty wish for a happy, happy New Year. Yours faithfully, Thornton W. Burgess.

January 20, 1917

Red Pepper in the Bird Food Gave Happy Jack a Surprise.

He Didn't Know Just Whether Those Seeds Were Alive and Bit Him or Not—But the Birds Got a Chance to Eat Food Set Out for Them.

Dear Friends and Happy Jack: Last week I told you of the trouble Happy Jack Squirrel and I were having because he persisted in eating all the food I put out for the birds, and not content with that had nearly ruined the little house which holds the food. For a while Happy Jack had quite the best of me. I chased him away ever so many

times and tried my best to make him understand that that food was not for him but for my feathered friends. But no sooner would I disappear in the house than Happy Jack would be back at that food-house stuffing himself greedily.

Well, I think I've taught him a lesson at last. One day I remembered how when I was a very small boy and had told a naughty story my mother put some red-pepper on my tongue to teach that unruly little member that wrong-doing always brings pain. That gave me an idea. Perhaps if I could make Happy Jack's tongue smart, he would realize how wrong it is to steal. So I put just a spoonful of grain and seeds in the little food-house and I sprinkled them well with red-pepper. I didn't see Happy Jack around anywhere, but I suspect he was watching me, for no sooner was I in the house than he came running across the snow, climbed up the grape-trellis to that little food-house and settled himself comfortably for a feast. I watched him from the window.

For a minute or two nothing happened and he ate greedily. Then suddenly he lifted his head with the most surprised look on his face, Then he rubbed his nose on the edge of the tray in which he was sitting, picked up some more seeds and began to eat them and then gave a funny little jump and scrambled up to the top of the trellis, rubbing his nose against it all the way. He ran along the top of the trellis to the other end, stopping every two three steps to rub his nose. On the last post he sat down to think it over. In a few minutes he evidently made up his mind that he must have imagined that those seeds bit his tongue, for he turned around and scampered back.

Then the same thing happened over again, only this time he probably got a little more pepper than before, for he didn't stop at the end of the trellis, but jumped down and scampered across to a tall oak and climbed up that, rubbing his nose against the bark as he went. On a limb halfway up he sat down, with his back to the trunk and it was very clear that he wasn't feeling comfortable at all. He would shake his head and rub his nose. Finally he started for home.

Then I went out and took out the peppered seeds and put fresh seeds there for the birds, and presently they were having a happy feast. I suspect that after a few days Happy Jack will forget and that I will have to do the same thing over again, but I am hoping that he will learn after a while that those seeds are not intended for him. That pepper will make his tongue and mouth smart, but it will do him no harm, and that is why I have used it. I wouldn't harm Happy Jack for the world. You see, I really am very fond of him and love to have him about. But those we love have to be taught to keep out of mischief, and so I am hoping that I shall be able to teach Happy Jack not to be greedy when his little feathered neighbors are so hungry.

I really would like to know what he thinks was the matter with those seeds, wouldn't you? Do you suppose he thinks they were alive and bit him, or what? I haven't heard from any of you yet as to what you can suggest. I wonder if any of you have thought of a better plan. If you have, I shall be delighted to know of it.

Your friend, and Happy Jack's, in spite of his mischief, Thornton W. Burgess.

January 27, 1917

Do You Know a Better Way to Make Happy Jack Behave?

Mr. Burgess Put Some Red Pepper In With the Bird Seed and It Gave the Old Fellow Somewhat of a Surprise—The Birds Had a Feast Unmolested.

Dear members of the Old Mother Nature Club, did you notice my story of how I taught Happy Jack Squirrel a lesson in minding his own business in last week's Star Weekly? I had meant it for this column this week, but by a mistake it got into the News Section on Saturday last and was printed on page 29 in the last two columns. If you did not see it there look up last week's paper at once if you still have it around.

I told you in this column how Happy Jack Squirrel was stealing the food I had set out in a little bird house for my bird friends. And in the story published in the News Section I told how I had mixed some red pepper with the seed to see whether it would teach Happy Jack to mind his own business. It did! He didn't know just what had struck him at first, and he ran up the tree rubbing his nose. Then he came back and tried again, but this time he got a bigger dose, and the last I saw of him he was still rubbing his nose and scraping his tongue against the tree and looking very puzzled. Then I cleared away the seed with the red pepper, and the birds had a real feast undisturbed by Happy Jack. Do you know any better way of making that old rascal behave without hurting him? I wouldn't hurt him for worlds. I don't know whether he has learned his lesson yet or not.

Yours, as ever, Thornton W. Burgess

March 17, 1917

The Cross-bill is Not a Mistake

Curious Twisted Bill Helps Him Get His Living—Pretty Legend.

Dear Everybody: Someone wants to know why the Cross-bill has such a queer bill. It does seem funny at first thought that a bird should have the tips of its bill crossed. It looks awkward. In one seeing the bird for the first time wonder as to how it can pick up its food instantly arises. Those crossed tips seem like a dreadful handicap. But Old Mother Nature never makes a mistake as this would be to most birds. Whenever you see anything unusual, anything that seems queer, in Mother Nature's children you may make up your mind right away that there is a reason, a very good reason. And when you have made up your mind to that the thing to do is to try to find out what that reason is. You are always sure of finding something interesting.

Why is the bill of a duck broad and shovel-like? That it may probe in the mud for food hidden there, of course. Why is the bill of a sparrow short and stout? That it may the better crush seeds. Why is the bill of the eagle hooked? That it may tear the flesh on which it feeds. Why are the tips of the bill of the Cross- bill crossed that he may the easier get out the seeds from the pine and other cones on which he feeds chiefly. Simple, isn't it?

If ever you have a chance watch this little red member of the Finch family at work extracting seeds from cones you will see at once how perfectly his bill is adapted to forcing off the scales which protect the seeds he is after. While the seeds from the evergreens do not constitute all his food, for he eats other seeds, fruits, etc., they form

the greater part of it, and so he is provided with just the right kind of tools to get them.

There is a legend of the Cross-bill which the poet Longfellow wove into living verse. It is in brief this: When Christ was crucified a little bird flew to the cross and patiently to tried to pull out the cruel nails. But it could not, although it persisted until its bill became twisted and its coat red with the Savior's blood. That was the Cross-bill, and from that day to this it has had the crossed bill and the red coat.

In his ways of climbing about in the trees and using his bill to aid him the Cross-bill is quite parrot-like. There are two varieties, the American and the white-winged. The latter is distinguished by two white bands across its wings. In habits the two are alike. They are of social disposition, traveling in flocks, and apparently have little fear of man. On this account they are very satisfactory birds to watch, if you are lucky enough to have a flock visit your yard, or to discover a flock when you are taking a walk in the Green Forest. They will allow you to approach within a few feet. Down here where I live, they come but seldom, but I suspect they are more frequently seen around Toronto.

They are most erratic and independent, moving from place to place as the whim takes them, and not at all according to the laws which govern the migration of most birds. A place visited by them one year may not know them again for several years. While a northern bird, the Cross-bill sometimes gets quite far south. I imagine that the food supply has much to do with this erratic wandering. Apparently, there are no strong home ties as with so many birds. They will unexpectedly nest where they have never nested before, and the following season be seen no more. It is this unexpectedness which makes them interesting.

They nest early in the spring as a rule, but even in this matter so important to most birds, they are subject to individual whims. Their nests with eggs have several times been found in the latter part of winter, Snow deep on the ground and rivers and lakes ice-bound. Such rugged, hardy independence is an inspiration, isn't it?

Your sincere friend, Thornton W. Burgess

March 31, 1917

Spring Floods Take Joy Out of Life For the Muskrats and Meadow Mice

Jerry's Home is Invaded by the Waters, and Danny Has to Run for Safety When Floods Come.

Dear Clubmates: Already, we begin to read in the papers of floods. A spring really arrives we will hear of more floods, and still more floods. Always we are sorry for the people whose homes are swept away, or who are for the time being driven from their homes to find such shelter as they may. But I wonder how many of us give so much as a passing thought to the little people in fur who are driven from their houses by these spring floods.

One of these is Jerry Muskrat. You didn't think that Jerry minded water because he lives in it? Well, you know it is possible to have too much of even a good thing. Jerry loves the water. He simply couldn't get along without it. But too much water is as

bad for Jerry as too little. In fact, it often is worse. So Jerry always dreads the floods. He isn't afraid of being drowned. He is too good a swimmer for anything like that to happen. But he is afraid of being made homeless, and you know Jerry is a great lover of home. I don't know of anyone who loves home more than Jerry Muskrat does.

Now much as Jerry loves water, he doesn't love swift-moving water. He wants his water peaceful and quiet. So you always find his house in set-backs, beside quiet streams, in still coves, usually among the tall water grasses and bullrushes which love to keep their feet in water. When Jerry lives where he cannot well build a house like his cousin, Paddy the Beaver, he makes long tunnels in the bank, the entrance under water and always when possible where the water is quiet.

When the melting snows in spring fill the rivers until their banks can no longer hold them, the water flows over all the surrounding land. Then poor Jerry's carefully-built house is of no use to him. If it isn't swept away, it is covered with water, and Jerry can no longer stay in it, because, you know, he has to breathe air just as you and I do. When he built that house he made the little bedroom above the water. When the water covers it, of course, he cannot breathe there. The same thing is true of his carefully-made tunnels in the banks. The water fills them and drives him out.

So Jerry dreads the spring floods. They drive him out of his home so that for a while he becomes a homeless wanderer. He climbs up on stumps and sits there miserably until the rising water forces him to swim, or the log he is on goes floating off with him, and perhaps carries him miles from his own home before he can get ashore. Then he must begin life all over again in a strange place. It separates him from his family and friends. And sometimes it forces him to go hungry, for the water is too deep and too swift for him to get at his food.

Danny Meadow Mouse is another who dreads the spring floods. The water comes creeping over his beloved meadows, and Danny is forced to leave his home and go wherever he can for safety. His hiding-places are of no use to him now, and he must run for his life-run from the creeping water, and at the same time watch out for the keen eyes watching out for him. Poor Danny! He has a sorry time of it when the meadows are flooded.

So you see, it is not men alone who dread the spring floods. I suppose the life of Danny Meadow Mouse is just as precious to him as your life is to you, or mine to me. Just think how much more terrible those creeping waters must look to such a little fellow who has only such short legs to trust to, and nowhere to go. Poor Danny! I always think of him and of Jerry Muskrat when the rivers begin to overflow their banks and wish them well. There is much happiness in the spring, but life isn't all happiness, not even in the spring for our little neighbors of the out-of-doors.

Yours faithfully, Thornton W. Burgess.

May 12, 1917

Sanctuaries For the Birds Will Help Win Great War

Every Bird Protected and Kept From Harm Means Just So Much More

Food Saved From Worms and Bugs—Did You Know Jack Squirrel Likes Maple Blossoms?

Dear everybody: It is quite a while since I have written you. I'm sorry. If you are sorry, then I'm glad. I mean by that that I am glad to have been missed. Sometimes it is very pleasant to feel that you are missed. The reason I have been so long silent is that I have had so much to do that I haven't known how to keep up. And so I didn't keep up. I stopped writing these letters. But I've begun again and this time I am going to keep right on. At least I am going to keep on as long as you want me to.

Yesterday morning I looked out of my window as I was writing, and who should I see but Whitethroat. I whistled to him and he whistled back. You can't think how much brighter the day was just, for that. It is earlier than Whitethroat usually visits me. And that is funny, too, because the season is a little late here.

Looking from that same window I discovered something new to me. It was new to me because I haven't always used my eyes as I should. In the top of a maple tree across the way, Happy Jack Squirrel was very busy. He was climbing out on such small limbs that I wondered how he managed to hold on. It made me dizzy to watch him. I couldn't imagine what he could be doing there, and so I watched. Then I discovered that he was getting his breakfast. He would reach up and pull down to him the little twigs on which the blossoms of the maple were open, and these he would strip off and eat. Later I saw him eat a few blossoms of a poplar-tree, but he preferred the maple blossoms. Wasn't that a dainty breakfast? So I learned some- thing, that Happy Jack likes maple blossoms, and felt that the day was worthwhile.

Such a lot as there is to see these days, and only two eyes! Sometimes I wish I had as many eyes as a fly. But if I did have, I probably would see so many things at once that I wouldn't really see anything at all. So I guess it is just as well that I have only two, don't you? The chief thing is to learn to use the two.

To-day when I was digging in my garden, I turned up a queer brown chrysalis, nearly two and a half inches long and quite large around. When I picked it up the smaller end moved, so I know it is alive. Now I have it on my desk and I am wondering what will come out of that queer brown case. It is quite exciting. So there are interesting things to be found everywhere, even in the brown earth.

By the way, I am trying to get a lot of boys and girls here in the United States to help me do something for the birds, and so for the whole hungry world. You know if it were not for our friends the birds, we could not grow enough food to eat. The bugs and worms would eat it all. So I am asking the boys and girls of the United States to try to get as many farms and other tracts of land as possible made sanctuaries for the birds. You know a sanctuary is a place of safety. It would be a splendid thing if you members of the Mother Nature Club would do the same thing in Canada. If you are interested I will tell you just how to go about it. Every bird protected and kept from harm means just so much more food saved from the worms and bugs, and though you probably never have thought of it in just that way, it is doing something to help win the great war. You know what is needed now is food, and still more food. Everything, no matter

how small, that helps make more food helps to win the freedom of the world. Just think it over.

Yours faithfully, Thornton W. Burgess,Springfield, Mass.

May 19, 1917

Did You Ever See a Tree Frog In Act of Singing a Song?

You Can Do It If You are Quiet Enough in Your Approach to the Pool—He Has an Amazing Voice for So Small a Fellow.

DEAR EVERYBODY: I don't know how it, is with you, but here where I live, we are still waiting for gentle Sister South Wind and impatiently looking for gentle Mistress Spring. If it were not for the promise of good cheer which the birds bring, we would be discouraged. This morning I wakened very early, and before I fairly got my eyes open I heard Whitethroat singing Just outside my window. It made such a happy beginning for the day that I just know that the day is to be filled with pleasant things.

Every day now, but chiefly at night, I hear the chorus of the Smiling Pool, the peeping of the "peepers," as so many call them, or "frogs" as others call them. Those who call these sweet singers "frogs" are nearer right than they think they are. I mean by that that these little singers really are frogs, but not at all the kind of frogs that most people who call them frogs have in mind. They are not young bullfrogs or green frogs or leopard frogs, the common frogs that everybody knows. These first singers of the Smiling Pool, hardly waiting for the ice to disappear before beginning their spring song, are Hylas, Pickering's Hylas, and Hylas are tree-frogs, more often called tree-toads. So people who call them frogs are right, but those who think of them as the common frogs of the summer are wrong.

Do you like puzzles? If you do, just go over to the nearest pool where the Hylas are singing and try to see one of them. Try to see one of them in the act of singing. If you succeed, you may go home quite sure that you have seen something that not one in a hundred of your neighbors ever has seen. You can succeed, if you have patience enough and keep still enough and use your eyes enough, for the peepers will be all about you, as their voices will prove. When you do succeed, you will see a very tiny fellow, not over an inch long. Probably he will be yellowish-brown, although he may be ashy or even quite dark. He will be a lively little fellow and on his toes you will find tiny discs, the proof that he is indeed a climber of trees and bushes. But the thing that will surprise you most will be his size. It doesn't seem possible that so much sound can issue from such a tiny body.

Once you have located one of these tiny frogs, sit perfectly still and watch. The least movement on your part will be sufficient to send little Mr. Stickytoes swimming elsewhere. But if he does not suspect your presence, you will see his throat swell out like a little white bubble, and with his mouth still closed tightly there will come from him that high, sweet note that can be heard so far, and yet which is so elusive when you are close to it. It is well worth all the trouble and patience just to be able to say that you have seen a "peeper" peeping.

A little later these tiny Hylas will give way to their larger cousins and the latter will carry on the glad chorus. By the way, do you realize that from now on the Smiling Pool will be just a great big nursery? It will have more babies in it than any other nursery I know of, except another Smiling Pool, and there will be more interesting things to watch that will happen there. Old Mr. Toad's children and Grandfather Frog's children and the children of Stickytoes, the Hyla or Tree-toad, will all be born there, and I wonder how many of you can tell them apart when you see them.

Yours for sharp eyes, Thornton W. Burgess

May 26, 1917

Mr. Flicker is Gradually Becoming a Ground Bird

He Belongs to the Woodpecker Family, But His Liking for Ants and Other Ground Insects Has Led Him to Desert the Trees—His Antics as Good as a Circus.

Dear Club Members: Evolution is a big sounding word. It means change from one form or condition to another, usually from something simple to something more complex. We are taught that it is going on in the Great World all the time and has been ever since the world began. We know how it is done with things that man makes. The automobile, for instance, has been evolved from the simple gas engine. But in nature, evolution usually is so slow that we do not often realize the fact when we see it in progress.

But there is a certain friend of ours who is undergoing a sort of evolution which we can see by watching him and his habits. This is the Flicker, sometimes called Yellowhammer, High-hole, Clape, and dozens of other names. As you all know he is a woodpecker, one of the biggest of the family. Doubtless once upon a time all Flickers lived as good woodpeckers should, wholly in the trees. Doubtless the habits of Mr. Flicker's great-great-ever-so-great grandfather were very similar to the habits of other woodpeckers. But today Mr. Flicker, whom you know and I know and almost everybody who knows birds at all is acquainted with, has a certain habit which is very different from any habits of his relatives. Do you know what it is?

Mr. Flicker spends a great deal of his time on the ground. You don't find any of his relatives there, but if you are at all observing you will surprise Mr. Flicker there very often. It appears that Mr. Flicker is gradually evolving from a bird of the trees to a bird of the ground and no doubt in time Old Mother Nature will change his structure somewhat as a result. At least she is likely to gradually make his feet better adapted for use on the ground.

You see, Mr. Flicker is one of the most independent of birds. He has discovered that ants are a most toothsome dainty. Probably he found it out by sampling a few he found climbing tree-trunks as ants so often do. Once having developed a fondness for them, he kept his eyes open for them and so discovered that there are millions more on the ground than he could hope to find on trees. At least that is what I suspect.

Now, the way to get all you want of a thing is to go straight to where that thing is

most plentiful. Anyway, it appears that Mr. Flicker thought so. So now when he wants a meal of ants, he goes to the ground for them, and you may trust him to know an anthill when he sees it. He simply thrusts his long bill into the hill pushes out his still longer tongue covered with sticky saliva, and feasts on the ants that come rushing out to see what is happening. It is said that 45 percent of his food is composed of ants and he heads the birds as a destroyer of ants.

Being on the ground so much he has developed a taste for other ground pests, such as grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, etc. He destroys many of these. He eats some wild berries, but rarely takes cultivated fruits. He also eats some weed seeds. So Mr. Flicker is gradually becoming a useful citizen on the ground where pests are most numerous, just as his relatives are useful citizens in the trees.

By the way, did you ever see Mr. Flicker courting his lady-love in the Spring? It is one of the funniest sights I know of. The way he bobs and bows and ducks and the antics he cuts up are as good as a circus. A queer thing about Mrs. Flicker is the way she will keep on laying eggs if they are taken from her nest every day, one or two being left each time. Ordinarily she lays from four to nine, but will keep on laying if one is taken each day. She is like a hen in this respect. However this is a mean trick, and I know that none of you will try it.

Your very sincere friend, Thornton W. Burgess

June 2, 1917[1].

Boys and Girls Can Help Win the Great War

Do Your Bit by Getting Farmers to Make Their Farms Bird Sanctuaries

Who'll be the First?

To Secure a Farmer's Pledge—A Patriotic Movement We All Should Help.

A sanctuary is a place of refuge. It is a place where the weak and helpless know that once there, they will be protected from harm. Within the last few years the Canadian Government, realizing that some of the noblest game animals and birds would soon become exterminated by heartless hunters—unless they could be provided with places where they could live and breed without fear of man—has established a number of game sanctuaries in the national parks and, also, has made sanctuaries of a number of the breeding-grounds of water-fowl. Some Provinces have endeavored to save their big game by establishing sanctuaries. A few broad-minded individuals have established preserves or sanctuaries on the breeding-grounds of some of our most beautiful birds. All these sanctuaries are protected by law and most of them guarded by men employed for that purpose. But for the protection which these sanctuaries have afforded, some species of birds and animals would be extinct today.

But these national and Provincial sanctuaries are not sufficient. The great majority of our birds, game birds and insectivorous birds alike, both permanent residents and migrants, know no place where they may nest and live and enjoy to the full the blessing

1 This appeal parallels those in Burgess's sanctuary campaign for the *People's Home Journal*.

of life which God has given them and be free from the thing that should give them the greatest protection—man! The law permits killing, in the fall, Bob White, that splendid little friend and worker for our welfare; and poor little Bob knows no place where he may find safety from the pitiless hunter. The same thing is true of grouse and other so-called game birds. Think what it would mean to them to have just one place within reach of their swift wings to which they might fly with the certainty that they they would have nothing to fear from murderous hunters!

What O.M.N. Club Can Do

Never has any club had a better opportunity to do a noble work than the Old Mother Nature Club has right now. Every member of this splendid club of which we proud, is pledged to be kind to Mother Nature's children and to protect them. It is a splendid pledge. And here is a real opportunity to do something to prove that the pledge means something: to do something for the feathered friends who do so much for you; to do something for which you will always be proud. It is this: Establish one or more sanctuaries for the birds. This is very simple. All you have to do is to get someone who owns a piece of land which birds frequent to agree to neither hunt the birds there on nor allow anyone else to hunt there. Then do everything possible to protect the birds and to encourage them to make their homes there.

A sanctuary need not cover a large area. The larger it is the better of course, but just an acre is sufficient for a sanctuary. A great many of you live on farms. Induce your father to make your home farm a O.M.N. Club sanctuary for the birds by prohibiting all shooting thereon. Get as many other farmers in your neighborhood as you can to the same thing. Many of you who live in villages and cities spend your summer vacations in the country. Induce not only the owners of farms but, also, the owners of tracts of lands covered with woods, private estates, and, especially, forest preserves, to establish a sanctuary. Show them your O.M.N. pledge and explain the plan and what it means.

What Birds are Worth

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, the annual loss to American farmers and fruit-growers from the ravages of insects exceeds seven hundred millions of dollars every year and the same is true of Canada to a lesser degree. Think of it! And the greatest check to the increase of these harmful insects is our feathered friend, the bird. Bob White is an indefatigable destroyer of chinch bugs in the wheat field, boll weevils in the cotton field, Colorado beetles in the potato field, grasshoppers in the hay field and many more equally destructive pests. He has been known to eat two thousand crab-grass seeds and twelve thousand pig-weed seeds in a day. No less than one hundred and twenty-nine different weeds are on his bill of fare. Every woodpecker is worth at least twenty dollars in cash, and each nuthatch, creeper and chickadee from five dollars to ten dollars for services rendered in the destruction of insects injurious to trees. Many other birds are not less valuable. The man who makes his farm a sanctuary for the birds will establish one of his best investments. He will not be merely doing a kindly deed; he will be doing a profitable one.

If you want to help establish bird sanctuaries, cut out the coupon given elsewhere

in this page, and paste it at the head of a sheet of paper. Then get all the owners of land who are willing that it be turned into sanctuaries to sign the pledge. If each one of the 7,000 members of the Old Mother Nature Club would get one pledge it would be one of the greatest accomplishments on record for the conservation and protection of our bird life. Each one of you who does this will be doing a patriotic deed. With our great nation at war, it will need every ounce of food that can be grown. No single agency can do more to save and increase the crops than the birds. Here is way in which every boy and girl can prove a true patriot. Who will be the first to prove his patriotism and establish a sanctuary?—Send the pledges to us, and we shall publish them, together with the name of the boy or girl who secures them.

If you want more pledges,send a request to the Old Mother Nature Club, Toronto Star Weekly, and we shall be glad to forward as many as you can use.

June 9, 1917.

Old Mr. Toad is One of Best Friends Man Has

He's Worth a Lot of Money in the Garden, for He Eats Cutworms and Other Vegetable-Destroying Insects—He Has a Wonderful Tongue and He Changes His Clothes Four Times a Year.

Dear Friends: The other day I was invited to talk to several hundred boys and girls in a big school to tell them about "seeing things." Afterwards a great many of them wrote to me to ask about things they were interested in. Now whom do you suppose the most questions were about? Old Mr. Toad Yes, sir—that familiar old friend of our gardens. I don't suppose there was a single boy or girl among these hundreds but had seen Old Toad often, and yet all that any of them knew about him was that he is a homely fellow who hops about in the garden and eats worms. To most of them there was nothing interesting about him. That is, there wasn't until after I had got through talking. Then—well, since then I have had to answer a lot of questions about my old friend.

If you think Old Mr. Toad is altogether homely, just look at his eyes the next time you meet. They are like two jewels in his head. Many a handsomer fellow than Old Mr. Toad may well envy him as eyes. Then watch him catch an ant or a fly or a worm. Unless your eyes are sharp, you will simply see it disappear and will wonder what became of it, for very probably Old Mr. Toad I will be quite two inches from it. There is no secret about what happens. Mr. Toad has a remarkable tongue, that is all. It is a very handy tongue. Instead of being fastened down in his throat the way your tongue is fastened in yours, it is fastened way forward in the front of his mouth, and when he darts it out, he gets the benefit of the whole length of it.

There is just a tiny flash of pink as he darts it out and back, and the ant or fly has vanished. You see, that tongue is sticky and he has but to touch his victim. When the tongue is withdrawn, it folds back and deposits the victim far back in the throat at just the most convenient place to be swallowed. So that is another interesting thing about Old Mr. Toad.

Still another interesting thing is his manner of changing his clothes, which he does

at least four times a year. When he was young and growing, he did it much oftener. It takes him about five minutes to do It. He humps his back, the old suit splits along the back, he kicks his legs free, pulls the rest of the skin over his head and swallows it. Then there he is in his new suit, which was ready under the old one.

At this time of year, you may have hard work to find Old Mr. Toad. You may find plenty of half-grown Toads, but Old Mr. Toad himself is in the Smiling Pool. More than this, he is singing. You didn't know he could sing? Well, he has one of the sweetest voices of all the spring chorus. You know he was born in the Smiling Pool. His children are there now. You will call them tadpoles or polly-wogs, and very likely confuse them with the children of his cousin, Grandfather Frog. Next month the toad tadpoles will have become perfect little toads, very tiny, and will leave the Smiling Pool for great adventures on land.

Old Mr. Toad lives to be very old. There is a case on record of one who was known to be 36 years old and then was killed by accident. When he burrows in the ground he loosens the earth with spurs on his hind feet and backs in until the loose earth falls over him and covers him.

Not the least interesting thing about him is his value to us. The garden in which live many Toads will suffer little from insect pests. It has been estimated that Old Mr. Toad is worth at least $19.50 to any gardener for his destruction of cut-worms alone. The worms and the bugs that the birds don't get, you may be sure that Old Mr. Toad will if he can reach them. Put a broad board raised about an inch in a shady place in the garden for Old Mr. Toad and his companions to nap under during the heat of the day and they will re-pay you many times over. One thing more, don't ever fear that you will get warts on your hands if you touch a Toad.

Oh, yes, homely folks often are interesting when you know them.

Yours as always,Thornton W. Burgess.

June 16, 1917.

The Cowbird is a "Slacker." Shirks all Responsibility.

Female Lays Eggs in Other Birds' Nests and Lets Others Feed Her Young.

Dear Club Friends: Why is a Cowbird? That is a question hard to answer. Why indeed? Old Mother Nature alone can answer that question. Perhaps the Cowbird, Cow Blackbird, Cow Bunting or Lazy-Bird, whichever you please to call it, is a one-time good citizen gone wrong. I say perhaps, because nobody seems to know positively. It may be that once on a time, long ago, Cowbirds built nests and cared for their young as right-minded birds do. It may be that this was the case, and that as time went on, they developed bad habits and discovered that it was much less trouble to leave the care of their children and the responsibility for feeding them to their neighbors. You know there are just such people among human beings.

Anyway, that is what the Cowbird of today, the one we know, does—shirks all responsibility. This bird is a member of and a disgrace to the Blackbird family. The male is brown of head, neck, and breast, the rest of him being a glossy black with a

metallic bluish or greenish glint. The female is dark brownish-grey, lightest below and on the throat. They may be seen in the pastures about the feet of the cattle and occasionally you may see one on the back of a cow. It is this habit of associating with the cattle that has won for them the common name of Cowbird. It is presumed that they find favorite insects in the cow-paths.

But insects form but a comparatively small part of the Cowbird's food. Were it otherwise there might be more in favor of this lazy bird. True, it is a great destroyer of weed seeds, and this is to its credit, but against this is the fact that this bird is too often the indirect cause of the e death of birds who would do vastly more good by the destruction of insects. I say indirect cause, because the Cowbird does not kill other birds as the Hawk and Owl do. It does not prey on other birds. Nevertheless, the mischief is done just the same, and it is all because of the contemptible habit of deserting its own children to the care of others.

This would be had enough if Mrs. Cowbird chose as foster parents birds of her own size or larger, but this is no part of her plan. In such a case her young would have to struggle for food with others of equal size.

So she chooses the nest of a smaller bird, a Chipping Sparrow, or more frequently, a Warbler or Vireo. There she lays an egg. It is hatched with the eggs of the rightful owner of the nest, and the young Cowbird from the start is so much bigger than his companions that he gets most of the food. This means that he gains faster in size and strength and too often he forces one or more of the others out of the nest to perish.

Mrs. Cowbird gives no thought or heed to her children. She lays her eggs, usually only one in a nest, making use of four or five nests, and then rejoins her companions. Sometimes several Cowbirds' eggs are found in one nest. It is presumed that they belong to different individuals. The young demand to be fed long after they are big enough to feed themselves, often when they are considerably bigger than their foster parents.

So the record against the Cowbird is a long one and a bad one, for it cannot be less against anyone who refuses to care for her own children and thrusts them upon others.

In an economic way, as I said before, the Cowbird is of use in destroying some insects and many weed seeds, but it is to be feared that this is more than offset by the harm done the young of the little friends upon whose care its own young are forced. Why is a Cowbird? Who can tell? Can you?

Your sincere friend, Thornton W. Burgess.

June 23, 1917

Baby Birds Sometimes Fall Victims to Insects

Ugly-looking Worms Killed Family of Young Bluebirds—Heavy Rains Sometimes Kill Fledglings.

Dear Club Members: The past week has been remarkable about my home for the great number of Warblers which have filled our trees and bushes and have tarried

longer than usual. The desire to watch these feathered sprites has made it a difficult matter for me to work, for rarely have I seen such a host of them. Usually, they stay with us only long enough to rest their little wings and get the food needed to give them strength to continue their long journey. This year they have lingered twice the length of their usual sojourn, to the joy of us all who love them, and, I suspect, to the incalculable benefit of our trees and shrubs.

The other day I watched one for half an hour, during which time he was not still for more than a second at a time. He was in an apple tree in bloom, evidently finding minute insects there, then down in the shrubbery, where he appeared to find great need of his services on the leaves and small twigs. Several times he flew down in the grass, and his yellow-crowned head bobbed rapidly as he picked up food there. Twice he darted out like a Flycatcher and snapped up some small flying pest. So from trees, shrubs, ground and air he was taking toll from the great army of enemies to vegetation. And when I mentally, multiplied the good work this little sprite by the multitude of his fellows I began to dimly appreciate the economic value to us of this protracted stay of the Warblers. The cause, I suspect, was the discovery that north of us the front ranks of the Warblers found that snow still lingered in many places, and they returned, checking the advance of those which followed. On the first really warm day they left, and now only a few stragglers are to be seen.

Did you ever stop to think that while the birds are forever waging war on the insect world, they themselves often fall victims to insects? The other day I received a letter from a lover of birds who this year put up a birdhouse made from a hollowed-out block of wood covered with birch bark. Winsome Bluebird took possession and made a nest of pine needles. In due time the eggs hatched and Winsome and Mrs. Winsome were observed feeding the babies. Then it was noticed that something was wrong. Investigation showed that the young were dead. They had been eaten alive by a swarm of ugly-looking worms or grubs. Whether they or their eggs were in the wood of the house or under the bark or had been brought in with the material of which the nest was made I do not know, but I am going to find out. In any event, they were there and they had killed the babies of Winsome Bluebird.

The young of many birds are killed by body lice. Some are killed by internal parasites. A species of "tick," a vicious insect, kills the babies of Mrs. Grouse. Then, too, the birds suffer from bad weather. Heavy rains cause the death of very many fledglings in exposed nests. Violent winds shake the young from their nests and they die of exposure. So you see the birds have need of all the protection and care that you and I can give them. If all boys knew and fully realized these things I feel sure that none would even be tempted to throw a stone or point an air rifle at any of our feathered friends, or to rob their nests of eggs.

Blessed are the birds. And blessed, are all you who protect and cherish them.

Faithfully yours, Thornton W. Burgess.

June 30, 1917

Grandfather Frog is Most Wonderful of Submarines

He Can Stay Under Water as Long as He Likes Without Coming Up for Aid—He Breathes Through His Skin Then Instead of His Nostrils

Dear Friends of Mother Nature: Has it never come over you quite suddenly how wonderful common things are? The thing we see often seldom seems wonderful, yet frequently it is far more wonderful than other things which, because we seldom see them, seem very wonderful. I was reminded of this the other day when I chanced to startle Grandfather Frog into hasty and undignified plunge to the bottom of the Smiling Pool. The water was very clear, and I could watch him all the way to the bottom, where he disappeared in the mud. I sat down on the bank to wait for him to come up, but he didn't come. He remained down there at the bottom of the Smiling Pool longer than my patience held out and my patience was long and in reasonably good working order.

Now there is no one with whom I have had a longer acquaintance than Grandfather Frog unless it is his cousin Old Mr. Toad. I had known him so long that I had regarded him as very commonplace. I never had seriously thought of him as having anything wonderful about him. But on this particular day as I lay on the bank of the Smiling Pool waiting for him to reappear and he didn't, it suddenly swept over me that right here before me something very wonderful was happening. Perhaps it was because my mind, like the minds of all others, had been filled with thoughts of submarines of late. Anyway, it popped into my head that here was a living submarine more wonderful than the finest type of submarine perfected by the brain and hand of man.

Probably there is no more complicated piece of machinery in the world than one of these boats in which men sail on the sea or under it at will. When one is in danger from an enemy what does it do? Just what Grandfather Frog had done. It goes to the bottom and stays there until the men in it think the danger is past, or, and mark this well, until the men must have a supply of fresh air. They carry down with them reserve supplies of air, and when these are exhausted they must come up for more.

How is it with Grandfather Frog? Does he take down a reserve supply of air and must he come up when it is exhausted? Nothing of the kind. When he is out of the water he breathes with lungs just as you and I do, although he has to swallow the air in order for it to reach the lungs. But when he plunges into the water the air from his lungs comes up in little bubbles, then the nostrils are closed and kept closed. The fact is Grandfather Frog's moist skin is like a gill over the whole of his body, and through it he gets all the oxygen he needs, just as a fish does—through its gills. He is quite independent of air and he can remain down there at the bottom of the Smiling Pool in perfect comfort as long as he pleases.

A whale always impresses one seeing it for the first time as a wonderful creature. It is wonderful—wonderful because of its size. If it were as small as Jerry Muskrat, we would think it no more wonderful than Jerry, for, after all, it breathes just as Jerry does. Jerry can stay under r water for some time, but he must come up for fresh air or he will drown. The whale must do the same thing. If didn't he would drown. But here is commonplace Grandfather Frog as much at home out of water as other animals and as much at home in the water as a fish. If he were not so common, so familiar, we might think of him as wonderful, especially when we watch his transformation from a tadpole

to a creature so wholly different. But because we see him so often he is just a Frog. That is all, just a Frog.

The joy of an intimate acquaintance with Old Mother Nature is the discovery that common things often are wonderful things when you learn to see them.

Faithfully yours, Thornton W. Burgess.

July 7, 1917

Only Four Snakes in All U.S. and Canada are Poisonous

And Only One is at All Common in Canada, the Rattlesnake—Boys and Girls Should Not Kill Garter Snakes and Green Snakes—They are Harmless and Have Economic Value

Dear friends, I saw some boys dashing about in great excitement and beating at something on the ground with sticks. Of course, I went over to see what it was all about. When I got there the boys proudly held up for me to see the limp body of a two-foot striped snake, his head crushed by a blow from a stick.

Poor little Mr. Garter Snake! Helpless, harmless, he had been beaten to death because he was—a snake. He was one of the most inoffensive of Mother Nature's children, but he had been hunted and killed for no reason at all but that he was a snake. Those boys were not naturally cruel. They were simply thoughtless and ignorant. I don't suppose it had entered the head of one of them to ask himself why he had hunted that poor little snake or why Mother Nature had made snakes in the first place. I did not blame the boys for what they had done. I have seen grown men hunt little Mr. Greensnake in just the same way. He was a snake, and so he must be killed. Oh, the pity of it! And, oh, the pity of the sheer ignorance that was the cause of it!

Women often are very, very silly in their fear of a mouse. Men quite as often are just as silly in their fear of a snake regardless of what kind of a snake it is. There unquestionably is in human nature a strong feeling against snakes. It is born in us. That is, it is born in most of us. Undoubtedly it had its beginning in the fear of the deadly poison which some snakes possess. This fear fathered hate, and the hate extended to all kinds of snakes.

Now I can't say that I really like snakes myself. That is, I don't like to handle them. But I have learned to appreciate the beauty of many of them, and I have learned that most of them are harmless. Furthermore, I have learned that many of them are the exceedingly useful citizens of the Great World. If it were not so, Mother Nature would not have placed them here.

After all, snakes are not much different from human beings in one respect; there are good and bad. Poisonous snakes are dangerous just as among us humans criminals are dangerous. But because a few men are bad and to be feared, we don't fear everybody, do we? It would be just as sensible as it is to be afraid of all snakes just because a few are bad. The whole snake tribe suffers because of a few. We humans are the most intelligent of all living creatures and yet in some things we seem to be wholly lacking in intelligence. We rush out and kill a poor little harmless snake, whose right to

live is as great as the right of any other of Mother Nature's children, and all because of ignorance.

Just remember this: There are only four poisonous snakes in all the United States and Canada, and of these two are confined to the southern part of the United States. The four are the Rattlesnake, the Copperhead, the Moccasin, and the Coral. The two latter are the southern snakes just mentioned. Of each there are several varieties, but the characteristics in each group are the same. The Rattler always can be told by the rattle on the end of his tail. Kill him. The Copperhead is less easily identified. He belongs to the same family as the Moccasin, but unlike the latter is not a water snake. You in Canada are not likely to encounter him.

All other snakes are harmless. Just remember that. Many of them are of much economic value. Remember that also. And the next time you see a snake don't rush for something with which to kill him. Remember the club pledge.

Faithfully yours, Thornton W. Burgess.

July 7, 1917

Have You Established Any Bird Sanctuaries Yet?

Do Your Bit for Canada by Getting Farmers to Pledge Not to Allow Birds to Be Killed on Their Land

Have you secured any bird sanctuary pledges yet? Have you tried? One member at least has succeeded, and we have the pledge of Charles Verral of Weston, who has promised to make his farm a bird sanctuary. The name of the O.M.C. member who secured this pledge was not attached, but we offer we congratulations just the same.

We hope others will follow this example. Never have the boys and girls of Canada had a greater opportunity to do a real service for the nation and also for the world at large. "Food, food, food, and more food!" is the world-cry today. Doubtless most of you are doing your bit with a garden. Every one of you who has a garden is fighting the worms and insects that are trying so hard to eat all the tender green things, and you realize that unless these destroyers are kept in check all your hard work will go for nothing. The more gardens the greater the number of pests and the more the need of birds.

Destroy all the birds and the populace would starve in a very short time. Despite the ingenuity of man in devising poisons to destroy the insects that feed on his crops, it remains as true today as before spraying was known that the most effective check to crop-destroying pests is abundant bird life. Where birds are most numerous and are fully protected you will find, other things being equal, the most fruitful gardens, fields and orchards. Not only do the birds destroy the mature insects, but they also destroy the larvae and thereby destroy the eggs. Their services in the latter respect alone are beyond calculation. As destroyers of weeds through the consumption of seeds they annually save farmers and gardeners an enormous sum of money that would otherwise have to be spent for some other method of destruction. A junco has been known to eat 93 seeds in a little over two minutes. Dr. Judd one time watched about 525 birds

eating weed seeds on a single acre of a Maryland truck farm. He estimated that they destroyed not less than 46,000 seeds for that single breakfast. Wherever hawks and owls have been exterminated mice and other vermin have increased to such an extent that destruction to crops has been enormous.

If you have a garden, you are already trying to do your bit. Add to that bit by establishing one or more Old Mother Nature Club bird sanctuaries. If you live where you cannot have a garden do your bit by getting someone you know who lives in the country to make his land a sanctuary for birds. It is very easily done. Cut out the accompanying pledge and take it to people you know who live on farms who own tracts of land covered with woods, or private estates, tell them about the Old Mother Nature Club and the sanctuary plan, and ask them to sign this pledge agreeing to make their land sanctuaries for the birds. Be sure that each pledge is properly filled out and signed, and be sure to sign each yourself at the space marked "Witness." Then return the pledges to us.

If you live on a farm make it a sanctuary to start with, then go among your neighbors and get as many of them as possible to pledge their farms as sanctuaries. If you live in town, you doubtless have friends in the country. If you cannot visit them, write them about this patriotic idea and ask them to help the birds, and through the birds help the nation.

July 14, 1917

Animal and Insect Pests Are Due to Man's Meddling

In Most Cases It Will Be Found That Mankind Has Brought Affliction Upon Himself—Meadow Mouse, English Sparrows, Australian Rabbits, Gypsy Moth Typical Instances.

Dear Folks: One of your numbers writes me to ask if the Cowbird renders any service to the bird world to offset the mischief wrought by the habit of forcing others to care for its young. Not that I ever have heard of. It is of service neither to its feathered neighbors (it has no friends) nor to man. When I say that the Cowbird is of no service to man, I am not losing sight of the fact that it does destroy much weed seed, but I am keeping in mind that other fact that it lives at the expense of other birds of far more service to man.

Another writes to ask why Old Mother Nature made any pests in the first place if it is so hard to keep them in check. That is some question. Yes. Indeed, that is some question. It at once raises another question—what is, a pest? Danny Meadow Mouse alone is not a pest. No, indeed, Danny is not a pest. Bully the English Sparrow, alone is not at pest. But when Danny's tribe increases until the damage wrought in the meadows and grain fields in the efforts to get food enough becomes a serious matter, Danny and all his family become pests. When Bully's family increases to a point where they drive away birds of greater value English Sparrows become pests.

It sometimes looks as if Old Mother Nature has made some sad mistakes, some very sad mistakes, in this matter of pests, but a little study will show that almost always when you find an animal or a bird or a weed that has become a pest you will find that

man and not Old Mother Nature is to blame. This isn't always true but I believe that in a majority of cases it is true.

Let us go back to Danny Meadow Mouse and Bully the English Sparrow. Danny was created to make his home in wild meadows. The area suited to him was comparatively limited. He was not a pest then. Along came man and developed immense areas of grass and grain, thus creating ideal conditions for Danny. With such immense supplies of food the tribe of Danny increased beyond all proportion to what it would or could have under the conditions provided by Old Mother Nature. Man simply upset the balance established by Old Mother Nature. He is forever doing just this thing.

Bully the English Sparrow was not designed for America. Man brought him here, conditions were very much to his liking, and he has become a pest. Man took the Rabbit to Australia, and the Rabbit came very near to taking Australia away from man. Many of the worst weed pests with which our farmers have to contend were not native to America at all. Mother Nature didn't plant them here. Man brought them from other parts of the world. The dandelion, white daisy, and Russian thistle are examples.

It is the same way with insects. The Gypsy Moth, which has cost New England millions of dollars in the effort to save her trees, was brought here to be studied in captivity, and escaped to find conditions exactly suited to it to make it a terrible pest. Many other insect pests have been brought to this country in similar ways. Some native insects have become pests in just the same way that the Meadow Mouse has become a pest—by man's providing ideal conditions for propagation.

Left to herself, Old Mother Nature usually provides checks for the undue increase of any form of life. She maintains a balance. Man upsets that balance. An example of this is his destruction of birds. The birds are Mother Nature's natural check on the undue increase of insects, especially harmful ones. Man has destroyed birds until the balance has been sadly upset and harmful insects have increased out of all proportion to what would have been possible had man left the birds alone. Now he is paying for this thoughtless, heedless, and wasteful destruction of feathered folk. Man creates ideal conditions for rapid increase of pests, destroys natural checks, and then wonders what Old Mother Nature means by so afflicting him. Think it over.

Faithfully yours, Thornton W. Burgess

July 21, 1917

Grandfather Frog Draws In His Eyes When Swimming

Just Watch Him Next Time You Get a Chance—His Eyes are Like Periscopes and Always Come Above the Water First to Have a Look Around—The Original Submarine.

Dear Everybody: Every once in a while it comes over me how often we go about in this world with unseeing eyes. There is an old saying that "familiarity breeds contempt." I think a truer saying would be that "familiarity makes blindness." Things that we see frequently we pass without really seeing at all. I was reminded of this one day when I happened to startle Grandfather Frog so that he took a header into the

Smiling Pool, and a with powerful strokes of those great webbed hindfeet of his sought the safety of the mud at the bottom.

Out of idle curiosity I watched him, for the water was clear and I could see him until he disappeared in the mud. Many times before I had watched him do that very same thing and without a single thought other than that he was a mighty fine swimmer and I wished I could swim as well. But this time I noticed something. For the first time I saw him with eyes that really saw. I noticed that as down swam swiftly through the water his great, bulging, goggly eyes no longer bulged. So far as I could see they were practically level with his head. I wondered if this was so or if my own eyes were playing me a trick. The next time I got a chance I watched again. When I first saw him sitting on his big green lily pad his eyes bulged way out from the top of his head. When he had dived and was swimming under water those eyes no longer bulged.

Right away I decided that after all I didn't know Grandfather Frog very well in spite of long acquaintance. I wanted to know him better, to really know him. I wanted to know about those eyes. What I found out decided for me that Grandfather isn't Frog such a commonplace fellow after all. What I found out is that those big, bulging eyes of his are a good deal like the periscopes of a submarine. I began to wonder if perhaps the inventor of the periscope didn't get his idea from Grandfather Frog. In fact, Grandfather Frog seems to me to be the original submarine. I believe I mentioned this in a previous letter[2]. I mentioned then how he can go down and stay down as long as it pleased him to, but I didn't mention those two periscopes he carries, just like the latest submarines.

When Grandfather Frog comes to the surface the first of him to come above the water are those two bulging eyes standing well above the top of his head. Thus he has a chance for a good look about without showing the rest of himself to possible enemies. When he dives and swims under water his powerful legs send him along at a lively rate. Now the pressure of the water against those great bulging eyes would be very uncomfortable, to say the least. It might do them serious harm. What does Grandfather Frog do? He lowers them. Yes, sir, he lowers them right down in his head.

You see the sockets project downward from the roof of the mouth and he simply lowers his eyes in the sockets so that they no longer protrude above his head. Of course, he cannot see then any more than the submarine when below the surface. So Grandfather Frog swims very fast for only a short distance, then slows or stops, pops up his eyes for a look, lowers them again, and goes on.

I wonder how many of you knew this. I wonder how many of you ever have noticed any difference in the eyes when you have seen Grandfather Frog swimming under water. It is the discovery of such things, such really wonderful things, in familiar things that makes the study of the ways of Old Mother Nature a never-ending delight,

Faithfully yours, Thornton W. Burgess

July 28, 1917

Children Saved Life of Beautiful Bird, Wounded

2 *Toronto Star Weekly*, June 30, 1917

Thornton W. Burgess Tells How Accidents Befall the Little Wild Folk of the Forest—One Choked to Death in Crotch of Two Branches.

Dear Club Friends: Just as I was thinking about this letter to you this morning and wondering what I should write about, my doorbell rang and I went downstairs to find three little folks who I didn't know. They were standing in a row with very sober faces, and the eldest held in her hand, a male Scarlet Tanager, one of the most beautiful of all our birds.

"We found this poor little bird down in the park and we've brought it to you to see if you can do anything for it, Mr. Burgess," said she, and tenderly passed the bird to me.

Then I saw that sticking out from the fleshy part of the right wing was a stick, a twig from a tree. Examination showed that this stick had been driven through the flesh and projected nearly an inch on the underside. The entire stick was four and one-half inches long. Of course, the poor bird was helpless. The little folks who had found it had given it water with a medicine dropper, for it was very thirsty. Then they had hurried to me with it and did so hope I could do something for it.

I felt carefully to see that no bones were broken, then with a pair of pruning shears cut the twig close to the upper side of the wing. After that I was able to work the short piece through. Then I soaked the wound with disinfectant. All this time the beautiful Tanager made no struggle whatever, a fluttering of the eyelids alone showing that it suffered.

With the bird in my hand, I went he out in the yard to get some dry grass to make a nest for it, thinking to keep it until the wing had healed. Suddenly it slipped from my hand and flew to a nearby tree, where it remained for an hour or more and then flew away. The three little as folks and I rejoiced, and most of all, at the Tanager rejoiced no doubt.

Now that was a singular accident that had befallen that bird. Perhaps he was heedless. Perhaps he was flying from sudden danger. In any event he must have been flying with great speed when he struck the sharp point of that dead twig or it never would have penetrated the flesh as it did. So you see our little wild friends are subject to accidents just as we are.

One of the strangest things of the kind I have ever seen, stranger even than this of which I have just told you, happened to a Chimney Swift. In the village where I lived when a boy most of the houses were protected by lightning rods, a spear-like point standing two or three feet above each chimney. One day Sooty the Chimney Swift started to descend a chimney thus protected. He also must have been heedless or in a dreadful hurry, for the miscalculated and came down on the point of that lightning rod with such force that it was driven through his body for more than six inches.

Again I once found a Ruby Crowned Kinglet, a wee mite of a bird, that had been caught by the neck in the crotch made by two twigs of a birch and so had been choked to death. The twigs had sprung apart when he struck and then sprung back, holding him

helpless.

So with all the other dangers the little wild folk have to contend with they are subject to accidents. Somehow we never think of them in this light. At least I seldom do until something like this I have told you comes to my notice, but doubtless there is a considerable loss of birds and animals, too, every year through just such accidents as these I have described.

The Tanager would have died but for the tender hearts of the three little folks who brought him to me. Would that all humanity was as tender of heart and as merciful. And would that there might always be someone to aid when accidents befall our little friends of the Green Forest.

A PLEDGE TO PROTECT THE WILD BIRDS OF CANADA

Knowing the supreme economic importance of bird life to all branches of agriculture and its intimate relation to human welfare and happiness, and as a patriotic citizen desiring to do my share toward the conservation of bird life, and, so far as possible, to promote its increase, I hereby agree that all land which I own, rent or lease shall be made an Old Mother Nature Club Bird Sanctuary; that I will neither hunt nor allow others to hunt thereon; that I will do what I can to protect the birds, both resident and migratory.

Signature ....

Post Office ....

Date ....

Pledge form in the *Toronto Star Weekly*, June 2, 1917

Appendix 3. Mother Nature's News

Introduction.

In 1917, Thornton W. Burgess, assisted by the nature writer George Gladden, began producing a bi-weekly four-page nature-oriented paper targeted to children. He titled it "Mother Nature's News." As its name suggests, it related nature facts via the rhetoric of the news item— a journalistic take on the characters and places of Little Stories for Bedtime.

Here is Burgess's account from his 1965 memoir *Now I Remember*.

> Before the First World War, I wrote and edited a small four-page paper called *Mother Nature's News*. It was designed for circulation in the schools. Knowing the former President's [Theodore Roosevelt] keen interest in everything pertaining to Nature and outdoor life, I sent him a copy with a note saying I thought he might be interested in this effort to arouse and stimulate the interest of children in Old Mother Nature and her ways. I did not ask or hint that I would like an endorsement. I received a prompt reply typed on a half-sheet. It was brief and to the point. In a few words he explained that a man in his position could not endorse anything and wound up:
>
> "Never-the-less this is a mighty fine little paper."
>
> It was signed in his characteristic hand, "Theodore Roosevelt".
>
> What more could I have asked? *Mother Nature's News* was one of the casualties of the war. Years later I was told that Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt was one of my regular readers and a loyal follower of Peter Rabbit's adventures.

Burgess continued to use "Mother Nature's News" as the header for his non-fiction articles in the *People's Home Journal* after the demise of the four-pager.

The publication made its first appearance in May 1917 (after the entrance of the U.S. into WWI), promoted locally in Springfield and in Burgess-friendly newspapers, such as the *Kansas City Star* and the *Toronto Star*, each of which published extracts from *Mother Nature's News* issues for the rest of the year. In November, Burgess visited Washington D.C. and promoted the publication via an interview in the *Washington Evening Star*.

Nature Studies by Barrows Pupils

Suggestions Embodied from Talk by Thornton W. Burgess

It was suggested in Barrows School the other day, following the assembly in which Thornton W. Burgess gave his helpful talk on "Seeing Things," that the pupils might write essays or letters embodying the suggestions thrown out by this justly famed interpreter of Nature. Sample compositions written by Barrows School pupils follow:

Letter to T. W. Burgess, from Winifred Bradley,

Dear Mr. Burgess: The children of Barrows School, and especially those of Room 10, wish to thank you very much, indeed, for your delightful talk on "Nature,"

Wednesday morning. It was especially interesting to us, as we have been writing nature stories for language the past week. When we returned to our room, our teacher suggested that, instead of having our usual language lesson, that we write you a letter of appreciation. It is not often that school children have the opportunity of seeing and hearing a real alive author, and I assure you we were very grateful for this rare opportunity.

Nearly all of us at some time or other have read some of your pleasant nature stories and when we read "Mother Westwind," little did we think that someday we would hear and see the real Author of that interesting book. We also enjoyed your "Bedtime Stories," and certainly wish we were able to read all of your stories.

I am sure that you who are so good at seeing and hearing the children of "Mother Nature" must have surely seen the happy and pleased faces and heard the low chuckles of the Barrows children that morning as they eagerly listened to your talk and were fairly enchanted with those little anecdotes of the whale and the porcupine. I always thought until I was about eight years old that a whale was as large as huge steamers and that it jumped over ships, generally upsetting and sinking them, but now I have changed my mind.

Speaking of the toad, I never really took any notice of them, and especially their eyes. I think, to tell the truth, that there is nothing particularly beautiful about them, but the next time I see one I will at least take a good look at his eyes. I have heard frogs singing in the deep marshes of Michigan and I always stopped to hear the beautiful concert.

I remember an amusing little scene in Forest Park the first time that I ever visited it. As I was on my way home toward Sumner Avenue, just before I crossed that little bridge leading toward the waiting room, I saw a little gray baby squirrel who immediately came running toward me. I bought some peanuts and he ate them out of my hand and then played around with me for quite a while. I was sorry to leave this little new friend, and even now when I visit the park, I still see the little squirrel.

We always like to hear woodland stories, and as we have seen a copy of your little woodland paper, I am sure that a very great many boys and girls of Springfield will subscribe for it.

Your sincere friend, Winifred Bradley.

Edith Dolan Writes Letter.

Dear Mr. Burgess, We Barrows children greatly enjoy our Wednesday morning assemblies, and this morning were quite delighted to hear that Mr. Burgess the author of so many charming nature stories was to be our speaker. We all enjoyed it very much I am sure as you could tell by the happy faces of the children. We wish to thank you for coming to Barrows and we all appreciate your talk. I hope my ears and my eyes will be opened to hear and see more of the wonderful secrets Mother Nature has to tell us children.

The Toad's beauty interested me not a little for I never before looked upon him a

gardener and singer. I have seen many toads about the garden in my home but never particularly noticed them but I shall from now on.

The story of the Whale was very good too. The queer idea you had of the color of a whale was most singular. Now let me tell you the way I learned the color of a whale.

I had never pondered much on the color of this huge fish but upon hearing its name mentioned I always thought of it as a large fish colored similar to all common fish. One day my mother purchased a package of washing soda. Upon the package was a picture of a Whale—the color was black all over except on one spot where it was white—the words inscribed upon the whale were "Soapine did it." Was not that an odd way of learning the color of a whale.

Miss Fiske has shown us pupils a copy of your little newspaper and I hope to be a subscriber. I presume these storys in your paper will be very interesting to me as I have read a number of your books such as, "Mother West Wind's Children," "The Adventures of Johnny Chuck and others. I hope in the near future I will see you at Barrows again and hear you talk of your woodland friends.

Yours sincerely, Edith M. Dolan

Helen Sornborger's Letter.

My Dear Mr. Burgess: This morning, I was one of your listeners and I think you must know that we Barrows boys and girls enjoyed your visit and talk very much. It is not often that we have a real live author visit us and now we realize that you live right here among us, while before this we probably thought that you lived somewhere else, and we knew your stories and not you. After this when we read your stories, we shall think of you as we saw and heard you this morning.

You spoke of people thinking a horse hair would change into a hairy snake and of porcupines shooting their quills. When I was about five years old, I was told that I could catch birds by throwing salt on their tails, but I soon found it to be a joke.

You also spoke of toads being beautiful especially their eyes. I have noticed the way they wink them but I have seen nothing beautiful about their body or song. Probably if I had my eyes open the way you have I could of seen the beauty about them. After hearing you tell of the good a toad does I am sure I will protect them in every way I can.

When I was in third grade, I read Mother West Wind and her children. I have not ready your series of bedtime stories but from the pictures I have seen in them I think they are very interesting. You told Miss Fiske we could subscribe for Mother Nature's News at 5 cents for two months and I will be sure to do so for I would like to know more about the birds and animals.

Sincerely yours, Helen Sornborger

(*Springfield Union*, May 6, 1917)

A Mother Nature Newspaper

News of the Green Forest and Meadows from Thornton W. Burgess

"Extra! Extra! All the latest news from the Green Meadows and the Green Forest! Big sensation in the Old Orchard!"

That, or something like it, may be expected soon, for a newspaper has been started to handle just such items. It is the "Mother Nature's News," and Thornton W. Burgess of Springfield, Mass., author of "The Little Stories for Bedtime," which appear in The Star, is the editor. "Mother Nature's News" is designed by Mr. Burgess as an aid for nature study for children in the home and in the school and will appear twice a month throughout the school year. A feature of the paper will be a department for the answering of Nature questions asked by the children. In the first number which is just out, there are "Laughing Brook News," "Green Forest Gossip." "Green Meadow News" and "Old Orchard Notes," in addition to other articles.

The subscription price is forty cents a year

(*Kansas City Star*, May 11, 1917)

"Mother Nature's News"

Just What Boys and Girls Want

Mr. Burgess, Who Writes O.M.N.C. Stories, Is Starting a Little Nature paper, and It's a Dandy.

Do you wonder what Mr. Burgess has been so very busy at lately that he has not been able to write to us? He has told the Editor, and I am going to let you in on the secret.

He has begun to publish a little four-page paper called "Mother Nature's News," which will be issued twice a month at the annual subscription price of 40 cents, and special rates are given to school clubs who take two or more copies.

It is just what all young lovers of Mother Nature have been looking for. The paper is illustrated with half- tone photographs, and there are number of departments full of interesting information. Here are some of the headings taken from the first Issue:

"Johnny Chuck Wakes Up"
"The Bravest Flower."
"Making Friends with Tommy Tit."
"Something to Do."
"The Fairies Return."
"Green Forest Gossip."
"Green Meadow News."
"Old Orchard Notes."
"What Do You Want to Know?"—a department which seeks to answer any Nature question you may want to ask.

If every number is as full of good things as the first one, every boy and girl in America who is a Nature lover will soon be a subscriber. If you want a sample copy, write to Mr. T. W. Burgess at 61 Washington Road, Springfield, Mass., or if you want to subscribe now, send him your forty cents.

We are going to take the space usually given to stories by Old Mother Nature Club members and reprint some of the best stuff from Mr. Burgess new paper, "Mother Nature's News."

Seeing Things

The most wonderful, interesting and beautiful secrets of all the world are Mother Nature's. They are all about us everywhere. And they are secrets only because we make them such. It is because we do not use our eyes and our ears and our minds as we might, and as it is intended that we should, that the wonderful things Mother Nature is all the time doing right under our very noses are secrets. She doesn't Intend them for secrets. She is always ready to show them to "the patient eye that seeks and waits."

There is no secret way of seeing these wonderful things. It is just a matter of patience and not trying to see too much at once. If you want to find out the ways of a bird you must watch that bird and nothing else. If at the same, time you try to see the trees and the flowers and the insects you miss the secrets of the bird. You must put aside everything but the one thing you are interested in. You must learn to be patient, to keep perfectly still, and to keep your attention wholly on the one thing you want to find out. That is all there is to seeing things. Your eyes can see all that the eyes of anyone else can see.

The Bravest Flower

You didn't know that flowers can be brave? Plants are living things. They die of hunger when they can obtain no food, and they suffer from thirst when there is no water. They are sensitive to heat and cold. And if they are so like other living things in these ways, why not in other ways? Certainly It seems very like bravery which leads a modest little flower to dare to be the very first to push its way up and do its mite toward bringing cheer to us who are weary of winter.

It is in a swamp or in marshy places, often in the bed of a very shallow brook, that you will find this first and so bravest of flowers and unless you know something about it you will not even suspect that there is a flower there. What you will see is a queer, purplish-brown or greenish-yellow curved horn with its small end pointing skyward. But go look at it closely. On the inside of the curve, you will find a narrow opening. Peep within. At the bottom is a queer, fleshy, rounded thing called a spadix. Look closely now, even though you have to hold your nose because of the bad odor: you will find that spadix covered with yellow dust. It is pollen, the flower-gold which you all know. The truth is that funny round spadix is covered with the tiniest of perfect flowers in full bloom in spite of surrounding snow, and even ice. You have found the first flower of the year, which learned people call *Symplocarpus Foetidus*, the last word meaning bad-smelling. Most people call it skunk or swamp cabbage because of the cabbage-like leaves which will appear later. That horn-like home of these tiny flowers

is Old Mother Nature's way of protecting them from the cold.

Making Friends With Tommy Tit

Would you like to have Tommy Tit the Chickadee eat from your hand as he is doing in this picture? All you have to do is to win his confidence, and this is not at all difficult to do. The chickadee here shown is one of a flock of about fifteen, each as tame and fearless as this one. Their friendship and confidence were won by feeding in the winter. First some suet was tied to a tree near the house. Later it was moved over to a window sill. They soon grew accustomed to feeding there. Then cracked hickory nuts, of which they are very fond, were put in a dish on the window sill. The next step was to open the window just enough to slip a hand out and hold the dish. Fifteen minutes of patient waiting perfectly still was rewarded by having one after another flit down and help himself to a bit of nut. The final move was to go outside after a few days of the window feeding and stand perfectly still with the dish of nuts held where they could see it. Almost at once the birds came down to it. After that the dish was discarded and they would take nut meats from hand, shoulder, head, or any place they were but where they could be seen. Tommy Tit knew there was nothing to fear and so he was absolutely fearless. It should be this way with all our little friends.

Something to Do

This is the season when there are lots of things to do and great fun in doing them.

Start a list of the birds you see and know with the exact dates of the first time you see them. Put down only those you are sure about. When you see one you are not sure of watch it closely and see what colors or markings it has, and just where they are. Also note whether the bird is high up in trees, or in low bushes, or on the ground most of the time. See if you can be the one in your class to get the longest list of birds this spring.

Hunt for wild flowers and keep record of all the kinds you find and the dates you first find them. Remember that flowers grow on tree and bushes as well as on plants, Learn to know them by name.

Watch the trees and see which is the first one to put on its leaves. See how many you can find that put out flowers before they do leaves.

Look out for the striped chipmunk and try to find his hole. Often it is better than the best puzzle you ever puzzled over.

Green Forest Gossip

The Hepaticas have burst their furs and their smiling blue and white faces are to be found now by those who know where to look for them. They are among the bravest of the flowers and bloom while the snow still lingers.

Hooty the Great Horned Owl has three eggs almost ready to hatch. They are in an old nest of Blacky the Crow's which Hooty didn't even take the trouble to repair. He is the first of the birds to nest.

Lightfoot the Deer has lost his horns and already a new pair have started to grow.

They are not very comfortable and he is keeping much by himself these days.

Green Meadow News

Winsome Bluebird is due from the sunny South. Watch for him on the fence posts or the top of lone trees. When you hear a sweet warbling whistle that seems to come right out of the air from nowhere in particular you will know that Winsome has arrived. That whistle may sound far away when he is right at hand, and it may sound near when he is some distance away, so watch out! Who will be the first to see him?

The Laughing Brook is laughing once more, and that means that any day you may expect to hear the tinkling, happy song of Little Friend the Song Sparrow among the bushes beside it. Don't look high for Little Friend, because he is always near the ground.

Danny Meadow Mouse already has some babies in his snug little nest of grass under a certain big tussock. If you find them don't tell Reddy Fox. He comes down to the green meadows every night to look for them.

The Hylas, which some folks call "peepers" and some call frogs, have begun to sing in the Smiling Pool. The best test in the world for sharp eyes is to try to see one of them singing. See if you can do it.

Old Orchard Notes

Bully the English Sparrow had taken possession of the old home of Skimmer the Swallow and already is boasting of five eggs there. It is well known that Mr. and Mrs. Skimmer fully expected to return to the home which they occupied for the last two years. They are due to arrive from the South soon, and it is feared that when they find their old home occupied they will leave the Old Orchard altogether. This would be a pity, as they are useful and charming citizens and would be much missed. Mr. and Mrs. Bully are cordially disliked by the entire neighborhood.

Tommy Tit the Chickadee has announced that he and his wife have decided to move over from their former home on the edge of the Green Forest to take possession of one of the little houses put up by Farmer Brown's boy. They are quite delighted with it. They will be a distinct addition to the Old Orchard colony.

Drummer the Woodpecker is hard at work cutting out a new home in a tree on the opposite side of the Old Orchard from where he lived formerly. When it is finished, he and Mrs. Drummer will be very pleasantly situated. Hope is expressed that Mr. and Mrs. Skimmer will move into Drummer's old house.

(*Toronto Star*, Mary 12, 1917)

Literary News and Notes

Mother Nature's News

A new paper of modest size, but neat appearance (one would say format but for

the recent protests in the London Times Literary Supplement against using this word in anything but the strict French sense). bears the pleasant title of Mother Nature's News. It consists mostly of "news" for little folks, and, when one says that Thornton W. Burgess of this city is the editor, the reader will know at once that the "news" is the information about Nature that Mr. Burgess knows so well how to present in the guise of a story, and with the turns of phrase that appeal to the youthful imagination. The paper is to be published twice monthly, and readers may write to Mr. Burgess for any particular information desired. George Gladden, formerly of this city, is assistant editor. All will agree that it is quite proper that the birds and little animals should have a paper devoted to their activities, and that Mr. Burgess should be its editor.

(*Springfield Republican*, May 26, 1917)

Gossip From Mother Nature's News

The New Nature Paper Which Mr. Burgess Has Just Started for Boys and Girls

Goldie and His Wife

Goldie the Oriole has arrived from the South and you will hear him whistling in the tree-tops, like the jolly good fellow he is. You can't very miss seeing Goldie. His whistle will tell you where he is, and all you need to do is to look in that general direction. Very soon you should catch the flash of orange in his plumage, set off by the black, and both standing out plainly against the green foliage.

About the first thing that Goldie did was to find Mrs. Goldie. She doesn't wear as gay clothes as he does and doesn't whistle[1]; but she is a good deal more industrious. In fact, she is too busy to whistle, for it is she who builds that wonderful nest in which she brings up her babies.

One sometimes wonders why any bird should build a nest of mud and sticks on a big limb instead of doing what Mrs. Goldie does, that is, sewing a hammock-crade, made of strings and rags and strips of bark, from the ends of drooping branches, there to be rocked by the breezes.

When Mrs. Goldie's four or five babies appear from the beautiful eggs (which are white with wavy lines of black) she becomes busier than ever, for bird babies are always hungry. Watch the nest for about half an hour and see how often she feeds her babies in that time. You will be surprised. You will notice too that Goldie himself now does less whistling and more work; for he is a good as well as a handsome father. And remember that every one of those luncheons for the youngsters is composed of one or more harmful insects, which is why Goldie and his wife are very useful as well as very beautiful and interesting birds.

Green Forest Gossip

The purple and white Trilliums are in bloom. Welcome Robin is quite indignant

1 Female Baltimore orioles do sing.

because they are commonly called Wakerobins. He says he always arrives long before they are awake.

The tiny little flowers of the Saxifrage are bravely doing their best to prove true to their name, which is taken from two Latin words meaning "rock" and "break." This is because this little plant loves best clefts in the rocks and it sometimes looks almost as if they must have made the little cracks in which they grow.

Peter Rabbit says that he knows that spring has really arrived now that the golden-hearted, snow-petalled Bloodroot blossoms are to be seen. By picking one you can always tell what you have found by the orange-colored juice that comes from the stem.

Green Meadow News

"Consider the lilies of the field. They toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

You know who said that and it is just as true of our Meadow Lilies as it was of those in Palestine. If the patches of Lady's Slippers are Mother Nature's shoe-stores for the fairies, the clumps of these yellow, brown-spotted lilies may be their hat stores. Or perhaps the lilies are bells which the fairies ring for their midnight parties.

Of course you know the dear little violet whose blue eyes look up at you trustfully from the cool shadows of the long grasses. But had you noticed that some of these blossoms, which grown very near the ground, do not open? These are the ones which Mother Nature selects to furnish seeds for more violets and she keeps the flowers closed so that the seeds may be protected and ripen in the dark.

Nearly if not quite all of Green Meadow's bird friends are back by the middle of May. How many of them do you know? Here are some: Meadow Lark, Cowbird, Bobolink, Grackle, Indigo Bunting, Goldfinch, Kingbird, Bluebird, Song Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow.

Old Orchard Notes

"Work first and play afterward" is the best possible rule for school children but Mother Nature sometimes lets her children play first and work afterward. May is play-month for the Old Orchard and that is why she wears such gay clothes. But don't forget that these beautiful garments, the blossoms, mean that a great deal of hard work is coming the work of making the fruit.

The Peach blossoms are in such a hurry that they can't wait for the leaves of their trees. And the peach itself is in such a hurry that it begins to grow while the blossom is still young and pink and beautiful. Look straight into the center of the blossom and you will see the tiny peach at the bottom of the little green cup. As it grows, it pushes up out of this cup. which is left where the fruit clings to the branch. And this is why the peach ends in a little point, instead of a star, as the apple does.

Jenny Wren, fussy and nervous as ever, got back about two weeks ago and has set up housekeeping in an old home of Drummer the Woodpecker. Do you notice that Jenny knows how to get long straws and grass into that little hole? She pulls them in by

one end; this she has learned to do from much experience with holes. Jenny, you will notice, is a bit cross sometimes with Mr. Jenny, but he doesn't seem to mind that, for he always keeps his stubby tail cocked up very pertly, and gurgles out his sweet little song as if he were the happiest of birds.

Chippy the Chipping Sparrow brought back from the south a sad little story he heard about one of his Michigan relatives. "You know," he said to Little Friend the Song Sparrow, "that we like to use the long hairs of a horse's tail or mane in building our nests. That is why we are sometimes called Hair Birds." This stiff hair is very hard to manage. Sometimes we leave long ends hanging below the nest, which I admit is rather careless. Well, this Michigan Chippy in some way got one of these hairs tangled around her neck and was actually hanged! Her husband found her quite dead when he came home with some food for the children. It almost broke his heart, but he is a brave little fellow so he went right ahead and brought up the family himself. We ought to be more careful, but then we do love those nice, long hairs."

(*Toronto Star*, May 26, 1917)

A Bird with a Secret

Nobody Knows Where Sooty the Swift Spends the Winter

Thornton W. Burgess in Mother Nature's News

When you first saw Sooty the Chimney Swift this spring you didn't think of him as a bird with a secret, did you? Well, that is just what he is. You think you know him as well as any of the birds, in fact, better than many of them. For you have seen him fluttering down into or up out of chimneys many and many a time, and at almost any hour during daylight in summertime he is to be seen dashing in his quick, nervous flight over the treetops and house-tops.

When he went away last autumn you were sorry, and when he came back this spring you were glad. But where had he been during the winter months?

"Oh, down South somewhere with the other birds," you reply.

Yes, but where? What part of the South? We know where the other birds go; or at any rate they are seen during the winter months in our Southern states, or in the West Indies, or in Mexico or Central America, or in various parts of South America. But what become of Sooty? Ah, that is a mystery—a riddle which even the men who know most about birds are not yet able to answer.

For this is all we know. In the last weeks of September and the first part of October, the millions of Sooty's relatives scattered throughout the northern United States east of the Mississippi River, begin to move southward, taking their insect food as they fly in daytime, and sleeping in tall chimneys at night. Southward they spread to the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico and there they are seen for a few days, millions| and millions of them. Then—they disappear! Within a few days not a single Chimney Swift is to be seen. Where do they go? Nobody knows. Did they sink into

the mud along the shores of the Gulf, or drop out of sight in its waters, as was once believed?

No; because during the last week of March you would hear a joyous twittering from the sky above those very same shores, and you would see again the swarms of Swifts, back again—from where? Nobody knows—except Swifts and Old Mother Nature.

(*Kansas City Star*, May 27, 1917)

Tales from Mother Nature's News

Some Extracts from Mr. Burgess' Splendid New Big Monthly Paper for Boys and Girls

In our announcement regarding "Mother Nature's News," the new bi-monthly nature magazine, published by Mr. Thornton W Burgess, we made a mistake in announcing the subscription price. In the United States it is 40 cents per annum, but in Canada, owing to the postal regulations, it is necessary to charge 20 cents a year more, making the price 60 cents a year. Mr. Burgess's address is 61 Washington road, Springfield, Mass. He will be glad to furnish sample copies on receipt of a post card.

Instead of offering a […] for the first prize for the best story sent in each week by a member of the Old Mother Nature Club, we are going to give a year's subscription to Mother Nature's News instead. This is a prize worth trying for Remember the story must be about some living creature, and you must have seen with your own eyes what you tell about.

The Fairies Return

This is the season when on every side the fairies are awakening. You don't believe in fairies? Why, there are more really truly fairies than you ever read about or dreamed of, and they do more wonderful things than any story book fairies ever thought of. They are the Fairies of Life, and they are everywhere all about you. You don't believe in them because you never have seen them? Of course you haven't. To be present yet unseen is a power which all Fairies possess. Most of them go to sleep in the fall and sleep all winter unless we waken them, but in the spring the queen of the fairies, who really is Old Mother Nature, calls them and they awaken, for there is much for them to do.

Where are these fairies? Listen! Go ask mother for two beans. Split one of them open. Look closely as you please. You can find no trace of a sleeping fairy. Put the other bean in some moist warm earth in a flower pot and set it where it can get the sun. Keep it moisty. By-and-by something green will begin to push up into the light. Die away the earth and you will find that bean split and out of it coming one way the stem and green leaves which you have already seen, and the other way little roots. Could anything but a fairy have changed the inside of that bean into something so wholly different, into a living, growing plant? Did ever any story book fairy do anything more

wonderful than that?

Yes, there was a fair here, a Fairy of Life. She was asleep in that bean when you held it in your hand. There is one asleep in every one of the beans in mother's pantry. There is one asleep in every grain of wheat, in every seed, no matter how teeny, weeny it is, so teeny ween that you can hardly see it perhaps. There is one asleep in every nut. You cannot see them, but they are there in a magic sleep, the spell of which only Old Mother Nature can break. It is said that grains of wheat found in tombs of Egypt where they had lain for more than a thousand years were planted and from them sprang up strong plants. For more than a thousand years, Fairies of Life had slept in those grains, and then at the call of Old Mother Nature the long enchantment ended, the spell was broken, and they awakened. Was there ever a more wonderful fairy story. And this one is true.

Flower Friends

The bright red and yellow blossoms which smile gaily down at you from half way up the towering ledge, where it clings gratefully, is the Wild Columbine, It doesn't seem half as pretty when you take it home and put it in a vase, so leave it where its nods and smiles will please others.

The glorious royal purple of the larger Blue Flag blossoms show plainly enough at the edge of the Smiling Pool, and you can understand why the botanists named this family Iris, in memory of, the Goddess of the Rainbow, the messenger of Juno, whose favorite bird was the gorgeous peacock. But when you examine the blossom closely, you will see that deep lines run from its blue border to its centre. These are the little paths which guide the visiting bee to the nectar, but in order to get it, he must rub off on his back some of the pollen, which he takes to the next Flag Blossom, where it is needed to make seeds.

The big white bracts of the Dogwood shrub are easy enough to see, but what you see first really isn't the blossom at all. The true flowers are the little green bunch in the centre of the four white, petal-like growths, which the botanists call "bracts." And these bracts are growths from the scales which first appeared late last summer at the ends of the branches. All through the cold winter weather they protected the little flower germs, but in the spring they began to grow, and to open. Look now closely at these beautiful white bracts, and you will notice the little notch at the end of each. This is all that remains of the brave little scales which protected the tiny green flowers from Rough Brother North Wind and Jack Frost.

Sooty's Secret

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When he went away last autumn you were sorry, and when he came back this spring you were glad. But where had he been during the winter months? “O, down south somewhere with the other birds,” you reply. Yes, but where? What part of the south? We know where the other birds go, or at any rate they are seen, during the winter months. in the Southern States, or in the West Indies, or in Mexico or Central America, or various parts of South America. But what becomes of Sooty? Ah, that is a mystery—a riddle which even the men who know the most about birds are not yet able to answer.

For this is all we know. In the last weeks of September and the first part of October, the millions of Sooty’s relatives scattered throughout Canada and the Northern United States east of the Mississippi River begin to move southward, taking their insect food as they fly in daytime, and sleeping in tall chimneys at night. Southward they speed to the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico and there they are seen for a few days, millions and millions of them. Then they disappear! Within few days not a single Chimney Swift is to be seen. Where do they go? Nobody knows. Did they sink into the mud along the shores of the Gulf, or drop out of sight in its waters, as was once believed?

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How Insects Help

When you see the Green Forest and the shade trees putting on their spring and summer garments, don’t forget to thank the insects for the beautiful picture they make, and for the cool shadows of the foliage which you will enjoy when the hot days come. For though the Merry Little Breezes do some of the work of carrying from flower to flower the pollen which makes the seeds from which the trees grow, most of it is done by the insects, who work industriously high up in the branches where we cannot even see many, of them.

How Apples Grow

Compare the peach blossom with the apple blossom and you will see that they are very different from each other, and not in color alone. The cup part of the apple blossom closes over and sticks fast to the knob, and the seeds are enclosed in a tough case, or core, by which they are cut off from the pulp, or part of the fruit you eat, while the remainder of the blossom dries up and forms the star at the lower end of the apple. You see, Mother Nature wants you to eat the pulp, but throw away the core containing the seeds, so that they may become other apple trees. And for the same reason, she protects the peach seed in the hard “stone.”

The Sparrow Hawk

You will easily know the sparrowhawk. Usually, he perches on a dead stub or limb, or a fence post in an open field, or a telegraph wire—any place, in fact, where he can

have a clear view of the country, which is what all hawks do. He is about nine or ten inches long, and wears a bright, rusty brown coat, a waistcoat which is white, often with a reddish tinge, and usually is spotted with black, and a dull blue cap. He has a sharp, chattering call note.

The meadows and fields he likes best, of course, but he often visits the cities, even the big wilderness of New York; and sometimes brings up his family in a church spire or cornice, far above the roar of the street. In the woods, he nests usually in a hollow tree.

It is really a slander to call him a "sparrow" hawk, for he feeds almost solely on mice, small snakes, frogs, toads. and grasshoppers (in very large quantities), and very seldom kills sparrows or other birds. Indeed, he is a very useful bird, and should be protected everywhere.

(*Toronto Star,* June 9, 1917)

June Babies (Mother Nature's News)

They are everywhere, these June babies, in the trees, in the bushes, on the ground, in the smiling pool. If your eyes are open, you can hardly look anywhere without seeing some of them. For this is of all months the month of babies. All the Great World is a nursery. And because this is so. it is one of the best times of all the year to get acquainted with the little meadow and forest people. They are so busy caring for their babies, so brave when you happen near the precious homes, that you have the very best of opportunities to watch them and learn their habits.

Welcome Robin's baby who sat for his picture here, was too young to be afraid, but his mother was afraid and yet she was brave. She kept right close by, all the time chirping encouragement to him. And so it is always with most of the mothers among our little wild friends.

Most of the feathered folks in the old orchard have babies now, and it is a splendid time to watch and see for yourself what a tremendous number of worms and insects are destroyed that these hungry youngsters may be fed. Over in the old pasture the babies of Reddy Fox are getting their first experience in hunting. In the smiling pool the babies of Old Mr. Toad and Grandfather Frog are wriggling about as tadpoles. Mrs. Grouse is fussing over as pretty and lively a lot of babies as the Green Forest knows. So it is everywhere. It is June. the month of babies.

(*Toronto Star*, June 30, 1917**)**

Hold Still (Mother Nature's News)

Whatever you do when you are watching a wild bird or animal, don't make any quick motions. In fact, don't move at all, unless it is absolutely necessary to do so, and then make your movement, whether of your body or your hands or your head very slow

and deliberate. Unless you are entirely hidden, you may be pretty sure that the bird or animal sees you plainly—in fact, much more plainly than you see it; and is watching you narrowly even when it seems to be wholly absorbed in its own business. A quick motion of any kind is certain to alarm the naturally timid creature. Even Lightfoot the Deer, alert and suspicious as he always is, has been known to walk up to within a few paces of a man–if he could not get his scent—who was standing perfectly still looking at him intently all the time. But had the man made the slightest movement, away would have dashed the instantly frightened deer. All animals and birds are likely to act in this way, sometimes because, like Lightfoot, they are curious, but often because they are friendly and really want to become better acquainted this with you. Try to cultivate friendship. Hold still.

(*Toronto Star*, July 7, 1917)

Reddy Fox Says (Mother Nature's News)

It is a wise hen who roosts high.
It is better to be clever than merely strong.
It is a waste of time to bark at the moon.
It is easier to keep out of trouble than to get out of it.
Wisdom is obtained at the price of experience. A wise fox lets others pay the price.
There is no place like home. Therefore never lead trouble to it.
You cannot tell the size of a rooster by the strength of his voice.

(*Toronto Star*, July 14, 1917)

Nature Questions Answered (Mother Nature's News)

Dear Mr. Burgess: I saw a little bluish-grey bird running around on the trunk and limbs of a tree, and sometimes it came down the trunk head foremost. I was told it was a Sapsucker. Was that right? —W. B. M.

Answer—No; it was not. The bird you saw undoubtedly was a Nuthatch, the only one of the tree-climbing birds which runs down a tree head first. The Sapsucker is larger than the Nuthatch, is very differently colored (mainly black and white, with a bright scarlet patch on his crown), and always climbs head up, as other true woodpeckers do. There are three kinds of Nuthatches, the White-breasted, the Red-breasted, and the Brown-headed. Probably the one you saw was the first named.

Dear Mr. Burgess: Can Johnny Chuck whistle? A boy who knows lots about animals and birds says he can, but I never heard him do it, and so I wonder if the boy was trying to make fun of me.—C. B. D.

Answer—The boy was right. Of course, Johnny doesn't whistle a tune and probably the boy didn't mean that. But when he is frightened and dives into his hole, he often gives a whistle so sharp and loud that it will startle you. And so do several of his relatives who live in the West, especially the Whistling Marmot.

Dear Mr. Burgess: How do animals and birds know what not to eat? There must be some things that are not good for them, but how do they know?—D. S. A.

Answer—This is a deep question, and therefore a hard one to answer so that children will understand. Animals know such things by instinct, as we say, and instinct is a kind of understanding which Mother Nature gives to all her dumb creatures. Sometimes it seems to act rather blindly and foolishly, but generally it is right, and keeps the animal out of much trouble and danger. Human beings do not possess, and do not need, instinct as animals do, because they can talk and tell each other what is good or bad for them. Animals cannot talk and therefore must depend upon their instinct (and experience), which is born in them, and begins to act as soon as they begin to breathe. It is not true that birds or animals must be taught by their parents to fly or walk, or catch insects or fish, or do any of the things you see them doing. All these things they do instinctively and without any instruction whatever.

Dear Mr. Burgess. Can Striped Chipmunk climb trees? It seems funny if he cannot, for he is a squirrel, and other squirrels can. But I never saw one in a tree.—M. A. R.

Answer—Striped Chipmunk is sometimes seen in trees which have branches near the ground, or in trees which lean a good deal, so he can run up their trunks without actually climbing. But he does not and cannot climb as readily as a squirrel does, and he spends nearly all of his life on or very near the ground. Because of his color, his enemies—hawks, owls and weasels—would see him quickly in trees, and probably that is one reason he doesn't climb much, and therefore has forgotten how.

Dear Mr. Burgess: Does Paddy the Beaver use his tall for a trowel when he is building his house and dam?—W. B. S.

Answer—No; he does not, though of this is one of the commonest of the many mistaken ideas about animals. The only uses Paddy makes of his tail are when he stretches it out behind him as a kind of prop, or when he is swimming and uses it to steer his body, or as you use an oar in sculling a boat; or sometimes when he carries sticks or stones with it (when he is swimming) by holding them between his tall and the underside of his body. Neither does Paddy always build his dam with the curve against the current, and nor always cut down a tree so that it will fall toward his pond. These are some of the things which are much more wonderful, and which we shall tell you about some time.

(*Toronto Star*, July 21, 1917)

Nature Questions Answered (Mother Nature's News)

Dear Mr. Burgess: Why is a squirrel so timid?—E. H.

Answer—Because they are hunted so much by hawks, weasels, cats, men with guns and boys with air rifles more and stones. No animal is easily tamed once its confidence is won than the squirrel. It is naturally friendly and sociable.

Dear Mr. Burgess: In your paper will you please tell me the names of these birds?

They are all new to this section. We never saw them till t yesterday. All are smaller birds than the Chickadee and fond of trees and a bushes in blossom. No. 1—Dark shiny blue, white breast, white patches on wings. No. 2—Yellowish brown back, lighter breast penciled with brown, a yellow ring around neck with black patch on top of head. No. 3—Black, with orange patches on wings and tail. Tail large and spreading. Mate, brown with yellow feathers in tail which show when she flies.

Answer—As your letter has no superscription, and the envelope was mislaid, I have no idea where—that is, in what part of the country—you saw these birds, a point of great importance for identification. What you have given, however, are fairly accurate descriptions of (No. 1) the Black-throated Blue Warbler; (No. 2) the Cape May Warbler, and (No. 3) the Redstart (male and female), also a warbler. All are common migrants in eastern North America.

Dear Mr. Burgess: How long can Jerry Muskrat stay under water? —E. S.

Answer—I don't know and I know of no way of certainly finding out. It wouldn't prove anything to hold him under water until he was drowned, for if he were held, he would at struggle, and for that reason would drown quicker. Paddy, the Beaver, can swim entirely submerged for 200 yards or more, and has been known to stay under water for eleven minutes when he wasn't held in any way, so I suppose he might have stayed longer. Jerry is near relative of Paddy, and practically as aquatic to in his habits, but he is much weaker than his big cousin, and probably has less power to hold his breath.

Dear Mr. Burgess: How can I tell the poisonous fungi from the harmless? What is the difference between toadstools and mushrooms?—C. S.

Answer—I will answer the second question first. Toadstools are mushrooms. There is no difference, though some people call the edible varieties mushrooms and toadstools. None are poisonous to handle, but some are deadly to eat, and so it is best for children not to gather any to eat, especially as some of the poisonous varieties so closely resemble certain harmless ones that a mistake is very easy to make. It is always best to be safe, and if you don't collect any to eat no harm can come to you from them.

Dear Mr. Burgess: Can Welcome Robin hear the worms in the ground? He always turns his head to one side as if listening.—O. E.

Answer—Yes, I think he can. Certainly his attitude is that of listening, and often I have seen him yank a worm out of the ground after having apparently detected its whereabouts by hearing its movements. You are a good observer to have noticed this.

Dear Mr. Burgess: What does Prickly Porky the Porcupine eat?—Violet.

Answer—Chiefly bark, roots, fruit and various other vegetable substances, including cultivated vegetables when he can get them.

(*Toronto Star*, July 28, 1917)

Old Orchard News (Mother Nature's News)

Johnny Chuck is so fat he can hardly waddle. He has his house ready for the winter and will retire shortly.

Goldie the Oriole is getting uneasy. He will start for Central America about the middle of the month.

Picnic parties are quite in order these days. Now that family cares are over there is much going on in a social way among the Old Orchard folk.

Welcome Robin is living high. He says he is in no hurry to leave while berries are still plentiful. He has successfully raised two families this year.

Winsome Bluebird was one of the first to arrive in the spring and he will be one of the last to leave. Already he is beginning to mourn the approach of cold weather.

Every day brings new arrivals of the Warbler tribe from the North on their way to the South. Some of them are hard to recognize in their traveling suits. They report leaves already beginning to fall where they come from.

(*Kansas City Star*, September 8, 1917)

Bubbling Bob's Long Journey (Mother Nature's News)

One of the Green Meadow folk who has disappeared during your vacation is Bubbling Bob the Bobolink. The story of his disappearance is a very interesting, though a somewhat sad one.

When he reached our southeastern coast last April, he wore a suit of brown and yellow in stripes and blotches. Here he did much damage in the rice fields and thereby got the name of Rice-bird or Rice-bunting. As he moved northward, he changed his clothes gradually, until by the time he arrived in the northern meadows he was a jaunty and joyous fellow clad in a natty suit of black, white and buff. During June and about the first half of July he made the meadows ring with his crazy music box. Then there came a sudden change. The gay song was heard less and less frequently, and at the same time Bob began again to change his clothes.

By the end of July, he was wearing a costume of dull yellow and brown, with a few white patches, and he looked not unlike his rather dingily attired wife, while his wonderful song had turned into a single, metallic "chink." Then he and his brethren began their long journey to their winter home. In countless flocks they have gathered in the swamps of the Southern states, where they are known as Reed-birds and, alas, are shot by the thousands to be served at banquets and in restaurants to people, many of whom, one wants to believe, would turn away from the "reed birds on toast" did they but know they were eating Bobolinks.

Then comes the long 500-mile flight across the Gulf of Mexico, and yet other hundreds of miles over the forests of South America to the billowing pampas of Southern Brazil. And there Bubbling Bob will tarry until spring.

(*Kansas City Star*, September 9, 1917)

Who Paints the Leaves (Mother Nature's News)

A certain kind of wise man who thinks he knows all about Old Mother Nature's ways may tell you that it isn't Jack Frost who paints the Green Forest, the Old Orchard and the Green Meadow with the beautiful reds and yellows and browns which you see and enjoy in the autumn. Then, likely enough, he will go still further and tell you there is no Jack Frost at all. If you are puzzled by all this and ask him who it is, then, who dies all this beautiful work, he will begin to use a lot of long words which you don't know the meaning of, and when he is done explaining what he has said will be about this:

In the summertime when the trees are full of life and strength, their leaves are green, because they contain a great deal of a certain substance called chlorophyll (pronounced klo-ro-fill), which gives them their beautiful green color. In the autumn, when the trees' summer work of giving shade and helping to purify the air is done, this green matter begins to run out of the leaves through the stems and into the wood of the twigs and branches. But in doing this it leaves a yellow substance which had been hidden in the green, and also other substances which turn red in the cooler air. That is why the red colors (and the yellow, too) are the most bright and beautiful when the cool autumn nights follow warm days. So, you see, if it is Jack Frost who makes the nights cool, it is he also who turns the leaves yellow and red, whatever the wise man may say about it.

Laughing Brook News

Jerry Muskrat is full of business these days. He is building a new house in the Smiling Pool and hardly takes time to eat. Jerry prophesies a cold winter.

Spotty the Turtle says the days are getting too short and the nights too cold for comfort. He won't be far behind Grandfather Frog in seeking winter quarters.

Teeter the Sandpiper has left for Brazil where he will spend the winter. It doesn't seem just right not to see him bobbing and bowing along the Laughing Brook.

The Trout are seeking the gravelly spring holes in the Laughing Brook to lay their eggs. Little Joe Otter has been observed keeping a sharp eye on these places. He and Billy Mink are keenly interested in all Trout affairs.

Redwing the Blackbird and family have left the Smiling Pool for the marshes where they are living high on wild rice. They have not stated their plans, but it is understood that they will winter somewhere south of Virginia.

Some alarm has been occasioned by the crashing of falling trees far up the Laughing Brook on still nights. There is no cause for alarm. Paddy the Beaver is doing a little logging in preparation for the winter, and usually prefers to cut his trees in the night.

Grandfather Frog appears to have lost interest in nearly everything. He is reported already to have picked out the place in the bottom of the Smiling Pool where he will spend the winter, and he is expected to retire any day now. He will be missed by Long-

legs the Heron, but then Longlegs has missed him a good many times this summer.

(*Toronto Star Weekly*, September 29, 1917)

Pole to Pole in Ten Weeks (Mother Nature's News)

The Tern Holds the World's Record for Long Distance Travel.

Do you know what living creature sees the most daylight? Well, it is a sea bird, the Arctic Tern, whom probably you never saw at all. It is a very beautiful bird, about 15 inches long. with a pearl-gray back, wings and breast, a black-capped head, and a fine, long tail, deeply forked like a barn swallow's. All its habits are as wonderful as its appearance is beautiful.

About the middle of June, this tern lays its three or four eggs, which are of a light grayish color, heavily marked with chocolate brown-where, do you suppose? Why, away up in the always frozen northland, as far as land has been discovered, The only nest is a little hollow scooped out in the snow. Here the eggs are hatched, and the downy chicks are covered by the brave parents until they have grown up and got the use of their wings, which is in about the last weeks of August. And meanwhile, remember, the midnight sun has never set—it has been one long day of about 10 weeks' duration.

Then begins the marvelous journey to the far-away winter home. Southward, southward speed the brave, strong-winged birds. There must be much zig-zagging and twisting to one side or the other from the straight line, because food must be had; but the progress is ever southward, southward. Just what route the terns follow is not known, and probably never will be; but in 10 weeks from the time these wonderful birds leave their breeding grounds in the Arctic regions, they are seen again at the very edge of the Antarctic continent. And measured in a straight line the distance they have covered in that flight is 11,000 miles! Here the terns tarry probably a few weeks longer than in their summer home, and here for two months they do not see a sunset, while during the remainder of the time the sun is below the horizon only a few hours at a time. And then they begin their 11, 000-mile journey back to the northland. Think of it! Twenty-two thousand miles at least, and probably much more than that, covered in 20 weeks, and 24 hours of daylight for at least eight months of every year!

(*Spokesman-Review*, September 30, 1917)

Grandfather Frog (Mother Nature's News)

Grandfather Frog is the common Bullfrog. He is the largest of our frogs, being sometimes eight inches from the tip of his nose to the end of his body- His head is broad and flat. His body is also flat and very stout. His coat varies, sometimes it is green, sometimes greenish-brown, sometimes plain, sometimes spotted with dark markings. Arms and legs are marked with dark spots or bars. Underneath, Bullfrog is white, the male often having a yellow throat, but not always. The ears are large, though

you might not know they are ears unless told so. They are the round spots back of the eyes and having a little fold of skin just over each.

Grandfather Frog inhabits practically all of America east of the Rocky Mountains. He prefers lakes or ponds where he can have deep water as well as shallow, and he especially likes places where water-weeds and Iilies grow. He seldom goes more than a good jump away from water. He is a splendid swimmer and while swimming his big goggly eyes are lowered until they are level with the head. This closes them and keeps them out of danger but makes it necessary for Grandfather Frog to slacken speed and open his eyes every little while to see where he is.

Lungs are not used under water, the skin acting like a gill stretched over the whole body. This makes it possible for him to live under water for months at a time. He sleeps in the mud through the winter.

(*Toronto Star Weekly*, October 6, 1917)

Longlegs the Blue Heron (Mother Nature's News)

The Great Blue Heron has several names. It is called Blue Crane and Sandhill Crane. It isn't a crane at all, but a true Heron and one of the largest. It is found all over the country, in nesting time in colonies, but at other times usually alone. Longlegs is a handsome bird. The centre of the crown and throat are white. The neck is a pale greyish-brown. The back, wing-coverts and tail are a slaty-grey. This has a bluish effect, and doubtless gives the bird its name. The breast and under parts are streaked with black and white, and sometimes a pale reddish color. The long legs are black, and so are the feet.

Longlegs has very broad wings, and when he flies, he draws his head back on his shoulders so that he seems to have no neck at all, and trails his long legs behind him. He is a famous fisherman, and his long, spear-like bill is a terror to fish, frogs, tadpoles, and often to snakes and mice. He hunts by day or night as the fancy strikes him. Sometimes he stands motionless on the shore of a pool for a great length of time, looking as if asleep. But if anything good to eat comes within reach, his long neck darts forward like lightning.

His nest is a rough platform of sticks on which Mrs. Heron lays three to four rather large dull blue eggs. The Great Blue Heron is a lover of solitude, and the more lonely the pond or lake the more likely you will be to find him.

Green Forest Gossip

Hooty the Owl says he will spend the winter in the North as usual.

Now that the wild grapes are ripe, Mrs. Grouse and family are living high.

Happy Jack Squirrel is getting so impatient waiting for the nuts to ripen that he is growing short-tempered.

Bobby Coon says he hates to see the leaves fall. They remind him of the hard days

ahead when the hunters will come looking for him.

Every time Buster Bear sees Busy Bee among the flowers he loses his temper, according to common report. It is suspected that the cause is the fact that he has wasted many hours hunting for her storehouse. No one has a sweeter tooth than Buster Bear.

Buster Bear boasts that he knows the location of every beech-tree in the Green Forest and has an eye out for all those that will bear nuts this fall. There are times when Buster seems more Pig than Bear. Others besides Buster have eyes open for these same nuts.

Busy Bee is making the most of these last warm days to add a little to her own store of honey in a certain hollow tree. There are still some flowers, and Busy Bee means to take tribute from everyone, even though she cannot make quite as good honey as she did from spring and summer flowers. She is nothing if not thrifty.

Lightfoot the Deer is handsomer than ever and spends much of his time polishing his new antlers by rubbing them against the tree-trunks. He boasts two points more than last year and is inclined to be a little set up over it. He appears to have forgotten all about how disgraced he felt last spring when he lost the old antlers.

Have You Ever Noticed?

That the Grasshopper Sparrow's song is very like the buzz of an insect?

That the leaves of the Tulip tree look, at a distance, as if they had their ends cut off?

That Ol' Mistah Buzzard when he perches in a tree is likely to hold his wings about half spread?

That Ol' Mistah Buzzard when he scarred for life by the removal of its bark—which is never renewed?[2]

That the leaves of the white oak have blunt points, while those of the red oak are sharp, and those of the pin oak still sharper?

That the leaves of the slippery elm are rough to the touch in both directions, while those of the common elm are rough in only one direction?

(*Toronto Star Weekly*, October 27, 1917)

Around the City

Anybody around here want to know about Mr. Thornton Burgess, who writes the Bedtime Stories for *The Star*?

My goodness, children, don't crowd up like that! There's plenty of room if you will stop your pushing and shoving. Here, you boys, pile up on the desks and let the girls have the chairs. Well, Buddle Smiff, I'm s'prised at you, sitting down like that

2 This is an apparent typographical error.

when you see little sister standing. Anyone would think you had been brought up by a street car. Come right in, Mr. and Mrs. Everybody. Big sister, give your seat to Miss Serand Yellow, that's a nice little lady. Now, then:

Mister Burgess breezed into this very newsroom Tuesday, accompanied by Peter Rabbit, who is always lipperty-lipping around in the story man's brain. Why, yes, Buddie, it's perfectly simple when you get the hang of it. Look at the boy who kept the squirrel in his pocket—and that other boy who wore a fox under his jacket—and the lady who made a show of herself with a snake wound around her neck, the same as a real boa made out of feathers and everything.

Children, dears, he's a nawful nice man. Just like every child's father, and you know how splendid he is. And here is how the stories began:

One time, when Mr. Burgess was away from home, he wrote about some little animal creatures every day and sent it to mamma to read to their four-year-old son at bedtime. When he had sent, say a dozen, a friend who wanted some stories for tiny children asked if he might print the ones that had been written for little son. Mr. Burgess told him all right, if he wanted to, but he musn't expect any more, as he had written up all he could think about the people of the woods and streams. And after that he wrote over 2,000 more. And still a-coming.

Here's another thing: All the other little people that fly and chirp and swim and run in the great world outside of Farmer Brown's home have coaxed Mr. Burgess to put them into school children's paper, called Mother Nature's News.

He told about it to a young man who had just got back from a trip to a certain moon—the one that everybody travels to, except those who don't, poor dears. It is a curious world, don't you know, with no regular population, Just round-trippers, and which is famous, outside of the market, for honey that bees don't make, and for the extra fine quality of its happiness, which is warranted to last forever and ever—if you take the care of it you should.

There is one thing fine about happiness—it always wants to make happiness for others. Ever notice?

So the man from the moon came over to a certain person and told her he thought the schoolboys and girls—meaning you children—would be glad of the chance to make friends with all the animal creatures of the big world through Mother Nature's News, and that if you would write to Mr. Burgess he would tell you about it.

And now you know.

(*Washington Evening Star*, November 18, 1917)

The Age of Birds (Mother Nature's News)

The often-asked question, "How long do birds live?" it is not possible to answer definitely, as to wild birds, for the very reason that they are wild—that is, free to come and go as they please, which makes it impossible to keep track of them during the

entire period of their natural lifetime. This, of course, is true of all wild creatures who have their freedom. Nor is it possible to tell the length of their lives by judging from the number of years they may live in captivity and therefore under conditions which are not natural. As to birds, it seems probable, that the commoner small song-birds live from eight to nine years to even twenty-five years, in the case of larks, canaries and goldfinches, while gulls have been known to live for more than forty, and geese for more than fifty years. Parrots often live more than eighty years, and ravens and owls nearly as long, while there are known instances of eagles and falcons having lived for more than a century.

(*Toronto Star Weekly*, November 24, 1917)

How to Feed Birds

In these zero winter days do not forget to feed the birds that flutter about the windows and yards and, with their chirps and musical twitterings, lend a note of joy to the winter somberness.

Every boy and girl can "do his or her bit" in feeding the birds. In this Northern latitude the natural feed of the birds is hard to get this time of year, and they will quickly show their appreciation if a free lunch counter is provided for them.

In a publication called Mother Nature's News the drawings of easily made feeding stations are given. A suet protector can be made with wire netting fastened to the trunk of a tree and can be placed on a large limb, also. By placing the suet under the netting, the feed cannot be stolen by the house cat. Suet is relished in winter by nearly all the birds.

Any old box sawed in the way indicated in the drawing here will serve as the roof of another kind of feed station. Nail a block of wood in the center (inside) and bore a hole in it for the support, for which a broom handle may be used. While there is lots of snow, it would be best to put the shelf for the feed close to the roof. Bluejays are fond of chestnuts and acorns, which they will shell themselves. For the native sparrows provide hemp, sunflower and millet seeds, bread and doughnut crumbs, and dog biscuits broken into small pieces and crumbs. Chickadees, that flit about these cold days, are especially fond of raw pork rinds, and the Nuthatches and Woodpeckers are very partial to suet.

If you see birds sitting on the fence drooping or trying to pick seeds from the frozen grass tops these winter days, you may know they are hungry and just throw some breadcrumbs out of the window and they will be quick to find the feed.

(*Kansas City Star*, December 16, 1917)

Bedtime Stories Club Readers

What Do You Think!

Peter Rabbit, Sammy Jay, Grandfather Frog, Reddy Fox, Johnny Chuck and all the rest of old Mother Nature's children now have a little newspaper.

Mother Nature's News

tells all about them and their families and their doings. It is published twice a month from September to June.

Wouldn't You Like To Have It?

If you would—send 40 cents for a YEAR'S subscription—20 issues; 10 cents for a TRIAL subscription—5 issues; or ask for a FREE sample copy.

THORNTON W. BURGESS, Editor
67 Washington Road, Springfield, Mass.

Ad for Mother Nature's News in *Kansas City Star*, September 10, 1917.

Index

A

Amphibians
  Bullfrog, American (Lithobates catesbeianus)
    Grandfather Frog 227, 228, 250, 251, 252, 254, 255, 259, 261, 262, 263
  Toad, American (*Anaxyrus americanus*)
    Mr. Toad 108, 120, 255, 261

B

Birds
  Bobolink (Dolichonyx oryzivorus)
    Bubbling Bob the Bobolink 210
  Bobwhite, Northern (*Colinus virginianus*) 19
    Bob White 5, 17, 160, 210, 381
    Bobwhite children 18
    Mrs. Bob White 5, 18
  Chickadee, Black-capped (*Poecile atricapillus*)
    Tommy Tit 5, 10, 13, 14, 18, 58, 91, 163, 421, 422
  Chicken (*Gallus domesticus*) 36, 42, 218
    Dandycock 43
  Crow, American (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) 119, 120, 121
    Blacky the Crow 4, 73, 74, 78, 118, 119, 120, 121, 130, 135, 136, 210, 266, 269, 325, 358, 359, 360, 363, 365, 421, 422, 438, 439, 440
  Eagle, Bald (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)
    King Eagle 263
  Goose, Canada (*Branta canadensis*)
    Honker the Goose 290, 303
  Goshawk, American (*Accipiter atricapillus*)
    Mr. Goshawk 372, 439, 440
  Grouse, Ruffed (*Bonasa umbellus*) 356, 368, 370, 371, 372, 374, 375, 376
    Mr. Grouse 288, 291, 302, 309, 418
    Mrs. Grouse 5, 14, 36, 160, 210, 211, 288, 290, 300, 302, 309, 325, 350, 352, 366, 381, 383, 384, 418, 421, 422, 439
  Harrier, Northern (*Circus hudsonius*)
    Whitetail the Marsh Hawk 261, 262
  Hawk, Red-tailed (*Buteo jamaicensis*)
    Redtail the Hawk 136, 143, 144, 145, 146, 149, 254, 263, 266, 269, 325, 327, 336
  Hawk, Rough-legged (*Buteo lagopus*)
    Roughleg the Hawk 43, 82
  Heron, Great Blue (*Ardea herodias*)
    Longlegs the Heron 251, 252, 254

Jay, Blue (*Cyanocitta cristata*)
Sammy Jay 4, 5, 14, 58, 60, 73, 74, 78, 79, 118, 149, 150, 152, 154, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 164, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 174, 175, 176, 179, 182, 185, 210, 231, 274, 275, 276, 277, 279, 281, 283, 284, 285, 299, 301, 302, 303, 304, 317, 323, 350, 352, 354, 356, 357, 359, 360, 362, 364, 365, 366, 370, 371, 372, 375, 376, 383, 384, 404, 405, 406, 418, 419, 421, 422, 423, 432, 436
Kingbird, Eastern (*Tyrannus tyrannus*)
Scrapper the Kingbird 163, 167
Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)
Mr. Quack 150, 154
Mrs. Quack 150, 154, 381
Meadowlark, Eastern (*Sturnella magna*)
Carol the Meadow Lark 210
Mockingbird, Northern (*Mimus polyglottos*)
Mistah Mocker 292
Nighthawk, Common (*Chordeiles minor*)
Boomer the Nighthawk 274
Mrs. Boomer 274, 275
Nuthatch, White-breasted (*Sitta carolinensis*)
Yank Yank the Nuthatch 13, 14, 58
Oriole, Baltimore (*Icterus galbula*)
Goldie the Oriole 163, 168
Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)
Plunger the Osprey 259
Owl, Great-Horned (*Bubo virginianus*)
Hooty the Owl 135, 136, 237, 238, 240, 241, 255, 269, 284, 325, 334, 335, 336, 338, 339, 372, 378, 393, 398, 402, 427, 440, 441
Robin, American (*Turdus migratorius*)
Welcome Robin 54, 163, 167, 170
Sparrow, Chipping (*Spizella passerina*)
Chippy the Sparrow 163, 168
Sparrow, Field (*Spizella pusilla*) 210
Sparrow, Song (*Melospiza melodia*)
Little Friend the Song Sparrow 170
Turkey, Wild (*Meleagris gallopavo*) 336, 352, 356, 368, 370, 372, 375, 376, 403, 404, 406, 407, 408
Big Tom Gobbler 292, 294, 295, 296, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 306, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 315, 316, 318, 319, 321, 323, 324, 333, 335, 338, 351, 402, 404, 405, 418
Big Tom Turkey 291, 292
Mrs. Gobbler 292, 294, 295, 296, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 306, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 315, 316, 318, 319, 320, 321, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 330, 331, 332, 334, 335, 338, 351
Mrs. Turkey 292
Turkey children 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 331, 332, 333, 335, 338, 351, 371, 374
Vulture, Turkey (*Cathartes aura*)

Buzzard babies 283
Mrs. Buzzard 265, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 273, 275, 276, 278, 281, 282, 283, 284, 286
Ol' Mistah Buzzard 182, 263, 265, 266, 268, 269, 270, 271, 273, 275, 276, 278, 279, 282, 283, 284, 285, 287, 290, 291, 292
Warbler, Yellow (*Setophaga petechia*)
Tiny the Warbler 168
Whip-poor-will, Easter (*Antrostomus vociferus*)
Mrs. Whip-poor-will 274, 275
Woodpecker, Downy (*Picoides pubescens*)
Drummer the Woodpecker 5, 10, 13, 14, 58, 163, 350, 421, 422
Woodpecker, Red-headed (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*)
Redhead 350
Redhead the Woodpecker 352, 356, 370, 376
Wren, Northern House (*Troglodytes aedon*)
Jenny Wren 163, 167, 168

F

Fish
Trout, Brook (*Salvelinus fontinalis*)
Mr. Trout 253

I

Insect
Mourning Cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*) 46

M

Mammals
Badger, American (*Taxidea taxus*)
Digger the Badger 136
Bat, Eastern Red (*Lasiurus borealis*)
Flitter's babies 347
Flitter the Bat 339, 340, 341, 343, 344, 346, 347, 349
Mrs. Flitter 346, 348, 349
Bear, American black (*Ursus americanus*)
Buster Bear 5, 53, 70, 117, 120, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 135, 234, 244, 290, 293, 302, 350, 351, 352, 354, 356, 357, 358, 370, 371, 372, 373, 375, 376, 400, 402, 408, 413, 415, 419, 421, 422, 423
Beaver, American (*Castor canadensis*)
Paddy the Beaver 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 61, 62, 230, 290, 300, 386, 387, 388, 390, 391, 392, 393, 396, 397, 399, 402, 418
Bobcat (*Lynx rufus*)
Yowler the Bobcat 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 402, 403, 404, 406, 407, 408, 410, 411, 412, 413, 415, 416, 418, 441

Cat, Domestic (*Felis catus*)
Black Pussy 101, 102, 103, 106, 136, 137, 140, 141, 250, 395, 398, 399, 408, 411, 413
Cattle (*Bos taurus*) 182
Chipmunk, Eastern (*Tamias striatus*)
Striped Chipmunk 108, 154, 163
Cottontail, New England (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)
Miss Fuzzytail/Mrs. Peter Rabbit 3, 5, 14, 63, 78, 82, 84, 121, 128, 162, 163, 200, 296, 298, 302, 324, 398, 429, 430, 433, 441
Old Jed Thumper 19, 63, 73, 74, 76, 78, 188, 200
Peter Rabbit 3, 5, 10, 14, 17, 42, 43, 44, 46, 49, 50, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 78, 82, 84, 115, 116, 118, 121, 124, 126, 127, 128, 130, 147, 149, 150, 160, 161, 163, 191, 192, 195, 223, 225, 227, 228, 229, 250, 251, 252, 254, 255, 257, 258, 259, 261, 262, 263, 265, 266, 268, 269, 270, 271, 273, 275, 276, 277, 279, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 287, 288, 290, 291, 292, 294, 295, 296, 299, 301, 302, 303, 316, 318, 319, 320, 321, 324, 339, 340, 341, 343, 344, 346, 347, 349, 350, 352, 370, 378, 379, 380, 382, 383, 384, 386, 388, 390, 391, 392, 393, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 408, 418, 421, 422, 424, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440
Cougar (*Puma concolor*)
Puma the Panther 403
Coyote (*Canis latrans*)
Old Man Coyote 3, 26, 27, 29, 38, 39, 42, 54, 55, 57, 60, 70, 134, 136, 144, 145, 155, 293, 294, 295, 302, 306, 307, 312, 313, 316, 317, 319, 320, 325, 334, 336, 372, 374, 375, 378, 389, 393, 397, 403, 408, 413, 427, 431
Deer, White-Tailed (*Odocoileus virginianus*)
Lightfoot the Deer 293, 351, 352, 356, 366, 370, 371, 372, 376, 378, 379, 380, 382, 383, 384, 408, 419
Dog, Domesticated (*Canis familiaris*)
Bowser the Hound 18, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 33, 35, 36, 38, 58, 60, 63, 70, 85, 91, 92, 94, 96, 142, 180, 201, 202, 204, 205, 206, 211, 213, 222, 245, 250, 408, 410, 411, 412, 413, 415, 416, 433, 436
Fox, American Red (*Vulpes vulpes fulva*)
Chubby Fox 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 187, 188, 189, 191, 192, 193, 195, 196, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204
Cutie Fox 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 199
Dusky Fox 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 185, 186, 187, 199
Granny Fox 5, 14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 54, 63, 65, 67, 70, 73, 78, 79, 81, 84, 85, 144, 155, 200, 204, 293, 294, 372, 397, 408, 414
Reddy Fox 4, 5, 10, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 41, 42, 54, 63, 65, 66, 67, 69, 71, 72, 74, 75, 78, 79, 81, 84, 85, 88, 136, 138, 144, 145, 153, 154, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 170, 171, 174, 175, 176, 177, 179, 180, 183, 184, 185, 187, 188, 189, 192, 193, 195, 197, 199, 200, 202, 203, 205, 278, 293, 294, 302, 304, 306, 307, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 316, 317, 325, 327, 328, 330, 331, 334, 335, 336, 367, 370, 371, 372, 378, 393, 397, 403, 408, 414, 427, 428, 429

Reddy Fox's Children 170, 171, 184, 186, 187
Stranger Fox 71, 72, 74, 75
Stubby Fox 174, 175, 176, 178, 179, 199
Swiftfoot (Mrs. Reddy Fox) 65, 66, 67, 69, 71, 73, 74, 75, 78, 79, 81, 82, 84, 85, 88, 153, 154, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 170, 171, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 183, 184, 185, 187, 192, 195, 199, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 293, 302, 335, 336, 368, 371, 372, 378
Hare, Snowshoe (*Lepus americanus*)
Jumper the Hare 58, 408, 414, 416, 418, 424, 425, 428, 429
Human, Modern (*Homo sapiens*)
Farmer Brown 34, 35, 91, 92, 94, 96, 106, 112, 149, 169, 247, 250, 296, 382, 420
Farmer Brown's boy 5, 13, 17, 24, 26, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 41, 42, 57, 60, 61, 63, 91, 92, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108, 110, 112, 115, 149, 153, 163, 164, 166, 168, 169, 170, 182, 183, 184, 185, 203, 213, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 247, 249, 294, 296, 378, 384, 408, 410, 412, 414, 415, 416, 419, 420
Mrs. Brown 29, 30, 100, 101, 102, 105, 106, 222, 246, 247, 250
Mrs. Farmer Brown 25
Unnamed hunter 380, 382, 383, 384
Lynx, Canada (*Lynx canadensis*)
Tufty the Lynx 397, 403
Mink, American (*Neogale vison*)
Billy Mink 18, 19, 113, 136, 223, 225, 227, 228, 229, 230, 233, 234, 237, 238, 240, 243, 251, 253, 325, 334, 419
Billy Mink's children 230, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 240, 241, 242, 243
Boldest Little Mink 238, 240, 241
Mrs. Billy Mink 223, 226, 229, 230, 233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 240, 241, 243
Timidest Little Mink 241, 242, 243
Mouse, House (*Mus musculus*)
Nibbler the House Mouse 136, 137, 140
Mouse, White-footed (*Peromyscus leucopus*)
Whitefoot the Wood Mouse 6, 14, 93, 163, 351, 354, 356, 370, 372, 376, 418
Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*)
Jerry Muskrat 55, 251, 253
Opossum, Virginia (*Didelphis virginiana*)
Mrs. Possum 111, 210, 211, 351, 352, 370, 418
Unc' Billy Possum 93, 110, 111, 113, 130, 206, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 216, 217, 218, 220, 221, 292, 351, 352, 356, 366, 370, 418
Otter, North American river (*Lontra canadensis*)
Little Joe Otter 113, 228, 251, 253
Porcupine, North American (*Erethizon dorsatum*)
Prickly Porky 70, 117, 121, 130, 196, 205, 208, 408, 411, 419
Raccoon, Common (*Procyon lotor*)
Bobby Coon 5, 86, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 96, 97, 98, 99, 101, 103, 106, 107, 108, 110, 111, 113, 115, 116, 117, 119, 121, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 135, 254, 366, 370, 371, 382
Bobby Coon's mother 113

Skunk, Striped (*Mephitis mephitis*)
Jimmy Skunk 45, 46, 49, 70, 194, 195, 206, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 216, 217, 218, 219, 245, 246, 247, 249, 258, 260, 325, 419, 430
Squirrel, American Red (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*)
Chatterer's grandfather 358
Chatterer's Great-Grandfather 358
Chatterer's mother 6
Chatterer the Red Squirrel 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 58, 161, 193, 195, 196, 266, 350, 352, 354, 355, 356, 358, 359, 360, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 370, 371, 372, 376, 404, 418, 421, 422
Chatter's Father 358
Squirrel, Eastern Gray (*Sciurus carolinensis*)
Happy Jack Squirrel 6, 39, 91, 111, 266, 350, 352, 354, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 362, 363, 364, 365, 367, 368, 370, 371, 372, 375, 376, 399, 418
Vole, Eastern Meadow (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*)
Danny Meadow Mouse 102, 136, 137, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147, 149, 151, 152, 154, 160, 161, 162, 163, 262, 368, 399
Nanny Meadow Mouse 136, 137, 140, 141, 142, 143, 145, 146, 147, 149, 150, 152, 154, 163
Weasel species
Shadow the Weasel 31, 147, 325, 334, 372, 440
Wolf, Gray (*Canis lupus*)
Howler the Wolf 55
Woodchuck (*Marmota monax*)
Johnny Chuck 5, 47, 49, 50, 56, 88, 108, 120, 350, 431, 432, 433, 436, 437, 438
Meteorological
Brother North Wind 4, 6, 7, 9, 13, 43, 88, 90, 378
Jack Frost 17, 43, 47, 53, 85, 350, 367, 368, 378, 386, 389
Jolly Little Sunbeams 44, 291, 373, 383, 404
Jolly, round, red Mr. Sun 13, 15, 32, 43, 49, 82, 115, 130, 137, 145, 211, 236, 254, 257, 310, 326, 328, 336, 341, 347, 367, 404, 406
Merry Little Breezes 137, 145, 174, 176, 182, 185, 189, 231, 279, 326, 350, 383
Mistress Moon 82, 113, 130, 137, 406, 407
Mistress Spring 108, 120, 137, 149, 155, 431, 438
Old Mother West Wind 145
Mythological
Grandaddy Buzzard 286, 287
Granny Buzzard 286, 287
Old Mother Nature 19, 97, 100, 115, 120, 286, 383, 384, 413, 427, 430, 438, 440

P

Plants
Apple (*Malus domestica*) 7, 9, 13
Aspen species 387, 389, 391
Barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) 166

Beech, American (*Fagus grandifolia*) 350
Chestnut, American (*Castanea dentata*) 90, 91
Fox Grape (*Vitis labrusca*) 166
Hemlock, Eastern (*Tsuga canadensis*) 5, 18, 94, 157, 189, 191, 279, 291, 355, 357, 371, 379, 383, 384, 392, 403, 440, 441
Hickory species 151, 262
Mulberry (*Morus alba*) 166, 167, 168
Oak species 400
Pine, Eastern White (*Pinus strobus*) 268, 279, 386, 440, 441
Spruce species 15, 440, 441
Sweet Cherry (*Prunus avium*) 167, 168
Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) 166

R

Reptiles
Rattlesnake, Timber (*Crotalus horridus*)
Buzztail the Rattler 281
Snake, Black (*Pantherophis obsoletus*)
Mr. Blacksnake 136, 142
Turtle, Spotted (*Clemmys guttata*)
Mrs. Spotty 258, 259
Spotty's babies 255, 257, 259
Spotty the Turtle 257, 259, 261, 263
Watersnake, Northern (*Nerodia sipedon*)
Mr. Watersnake 255

S

Snakes
Copperhead, Eastern (*Agkistrodon contortrix*) 281
Sunbeams 373